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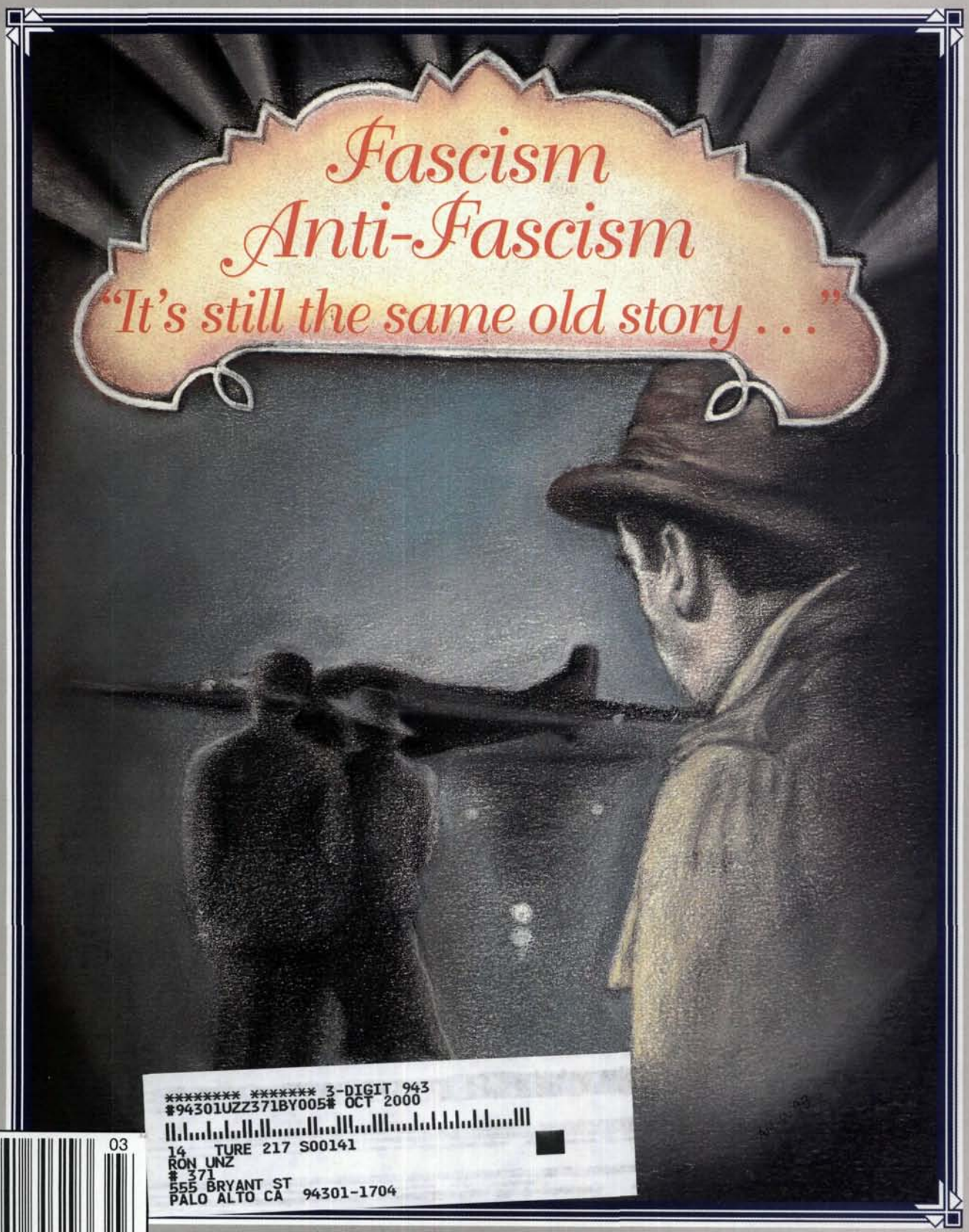

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Foreign Policy

One phrase leaps out of Paul Gottfried's review of Walter McDougall's *Promised Land, Crusader State* (January), and that is the strange idea than an American empire encompassing Latin America, the Philippines, and points beyond arose "without much popular opposition." Contrary to McDougall and Gottfried, the anti-interventionist tradition started with the Founders of this nation, who abhorred the empire-builders of Europe and explicitly warned against the temptation to imitate them. McDougall is naturally forced to recognize this—he acknowledges the "mugwumps" of the Anti-Imperialist League, but dismisses them as "bizarre"—yet manages to get around it by transmuting "isolationism" and "American exceptionalism" into "unilateralism"—the idea that we need not consult with anyone while we ravage our perceived enemies and pursue loosely defined "national interests." This is a far cry from the principled policy of the Founders.

Secondly, Gottfried ignores the contradiction in McDougall's book: while claiming to oppose "global meliorism" (i.e., empire-building under the rubric of international do-goodism), McDougall endorses every war the United States was ever dragged into, including both world wars. He also loves NATO and all the other entangling alliances that are the tripwires of future wars.

The hidden assumption behind the idea that "the United States was never really 'isolationist' in its relations with the rest of the world" is that there is no distinction between the American government and the American people: this is naturally a vital difference to a libertarian such as myself, but one easily overlooked by commentators concerned solely with elites and power politics. McDougall writes in the Machiavellian mode: his book is meant as advice to princes, not as a populist manifesto.

With NATO extension (which McDougall also endorses), the United States is about to commit itself to the defense of the Balkans as irrevocably as it is committed to the defense of Akron, Ohio—and Paul Gottfried is worried that we might go to war over "a universal right to homoerotic self-fulfillment." This fear is misplaced at a time when NATO extension means that the United States is about to extend its "defense" perimeter to the Polish-Ukrainian border.

"Unilateralism" and invocations of "national self-interest" do not disguise the same old Anglophilic dreams of empire. American nationalists such as Gottfried, who are likely to be taken in by this sirens' song, would do well to remember that the real enemy, the federal Leviathan, is right here at home.

—*Justin Raimondo*
San Francisco, CA

Dr. Gottfried Replies:

Justin Raimondo conjectures that the author of *Promised Land, Crusader State* believes that the American government was justified in entering every major struggle into which it plunged. This too was my reading of McDougall's qualified criticism of the style though not substance of American interventionism. While McDougall does not openly endorse an expansion of NATO, he probably takes this position as well. And while I do not "ignore" this "contradiction," Raimondo is on target when he notes that McDougall's opposition to "global meliorism" seems less than sincere.

But McDougall is correct to find continuity between American continental expansion and the later American empire. America's development as a continental power involved intricate dealings and military encounters with foreign states. Indeed, by the mid-19th century, a large bloc of Southern planters and Democratic politicians favored territorial expansion into Latin America. (As late as 1860, the Breckenridge and Douglas Democratic presidential platforms called for the immediate annexation of Cuba.) A noteworthy difference between earlier and later American expansion, however, has been the more powerful coalition of forces that now drives American globalism: e.g., a national media network, multinational corporations, and a steadily expanding managerial state. Nonetheless, it is naive to believe that an American empire is a totally

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modern notion restricted to the welfare-warfare state.

Raimondo also is mistaken when he assumes that it is only the American government but never "the American people" which fancies foreign entanglements. Most wars that the United States has entered enjoyed a high degree of popular support by the time overt hostilities began. By 1941, most Americans were outraged by the aggressions of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, though less by Soviet tyranny which was less critically depicted in the national press. Raimondo may also object to Anglophilia, but it has been a widespread American sentiment based on language, law, literature, biological ancestry, and religious heritage.

Finally, it is not at all clear that my fear of a crusade on behalf of some bizarre right is "misplaced." For decades American Presidents have struck postures as global defenders of civil and human rights. Our leaders keep telling us that what they consider as rights have universal validity and that Americans have a moral duty to uphold them. In recent months President Clinton has discovered a new federal duty to wipe out white racism and homophobia, and he has proposed, beside a renewed dedication to quotas, the use of our schools to teach sensitive behavior. Why is it inconceivable that this fevered crusade should lead to global missions to spread specific "rights"? Just as the Clinton administration claimed to be enforcing "a universal right to democracy" when it invaded Haiti, it or a succeeding administration might also put pressure on states to recognize the dignity of homosexual relations or a right to feminine self-realization.

Raimondo's appeal to the "people" against their masters has a fine populist pedigree but no longer corresponds to reality. As far as I can tell, most people harbor no significant gripes against "the real enemy," as long as entitlements are delivered and foreign entanglements ended quickly, without conscripted armies.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

BILLWATCH became the prime-time soap of early 1998, eclipsing even the Pope's visit to Cuba. Why should we care this time? Anyone with a mental age of 12 already knows that the President is an uncontrollable sexual predator. If a single straw could break the camel's back of our patience, why not the bale after bale of scandal that has been loaded down upon us since Jed struck oil and moved to the hills of Beverlee—or is that another series?

The pundits—Sam and Cokie, Kevin Phillips and Bill Kristol—are all shaking their heads, saying: "This time it is different. This bimbo eruption involves a potential felony." Who actually cares about obstruction of justice? This is, after all, a nation that believes Vince Foster committed suicide and Ron Brown died in a plane accident, and when the newspapers tell us that X rays reveal that the hole in Mr. Brown's head was not made by a bullet, we are not at all troubled by the mysterious disappearance of the X rays. If Dan and Tom and Peter tell us everything is all right, then everything is all right.

Then what is all the excitement over Monica Lewinsky? The leaders of both parties—and their spokesmen in the national press—would like us to believe that no one is offended by the President's indiscretions, either in Arkansas or in the White House. After all, these are private problems for Bill and Hillary to work out between themselves. As the President was being deposed in the Paula Jones case, so-called historians were comparing his lecheries with allegations against George Washington (guilty of writing an affectionate farewell to a lady, using terms of endearment similar to those he employed in a letter to her brother) and Dwight Eisenhower (probably guilty of a romantic wartime liaison). There is no evidence against Washington, while Eisenhower, at the worst, did what many lonely soldiers have done when they are separated from their wives. The only parallels for Clinton are sexual sociopaths like Casanova and Caligula.

There is a reason we do not want people like Casanova in power, and that is because they always turn into Caligula. A man who cannot keep his trousers zipped will not keep his hands out of the nation's till, and if he cannot go through a day (as Jack Kennedy boasted) without having sex with a strange woman, there is probably no law he will not break, no taboo he will not violate. The most vicious and incompetent tyrants are very often sexual predators—that much we know from reading Aristotle or studying the lives of Roman emperors and European kings like Henry VIII. But the reverse is also true: a sexual predator, once he has power, will use it to gratify all his appetites.

We cannot demand perfection from our leaders, and each nation sets its own standards. When at the funeral of President Mitterrand, both the widow and the mistress made an appearance, the French were charmed. But will we smile at Bill Clinton's funeral, when an endless parade of bimbos, sluts, and harlots come to pay tribute to "the big creep"?

—*Thomas Fleming*

REGARDING Saddam Hussein, "What in the world is wrong with him?" someone asked me the other day. "Doesn't he realize the bad impression he is making with all his twists and turns? One day he lets the weapons inspectors in and gives them unlimited access, the next day he comes up with some lame excuse for excluding American 'spies.'"

Perhaps he does have something to hide, but there is a simpler explanation: satellite TV. Imagine Saddam in his living room, tuned to CNN or CBS. After watching the lead stories for a few minutes, he turns to one of his aides and says, "What's the deal? Those crooks in Indonesia are getting all the airplay. Call Ted Turner. Call Roone Arledge. CALL MY AGENT!"

Celebrity is not only intoxicating: it is addictive. It is fashionable to complain about those dreadful paparazzi, but ask any starlet, athlete, or politician how he or she feels when there are no cameras around: frightened and lonely. Vampires and other undead creatures cannot see themselves in the mirror, and celebrities cease to exist the minute they are off camera.

Saddam is smart to worry about his ratings. All the big people in America do.

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Most public events are really staged "happenings" (remember the 60's?) in which an athlete gets to say he's sorry (or not sorry) for socking his coach or stabbing his wife. Bill Clinton is a master of this art. Running for the presidency, Bill and his wife went on television to confess to having had "problems" in their marriage. More recently, the first couple, who reportedly cannot stand the sight of each other, were caught by photographers in an intimate moment on the beach. This gave the White House a golden opportunity to insult the paparazzi, and the President could appear as a lovable slob who loves his wife.

In America these days, everything comes down to TV—even TV. No one knows this better than Jerry Seinfeld. Faced with bad reviews and potentially bad ratings, Jerry could have retired gracefully and gone on to other things, but why pass up an opportunity to be the lead story on the news? Some newspaper editors have even started counting down the Seinfeld episodes like so many days till Christmas.

The same newspapers regularly print features like "Today's Birthdays." Are these the birthdays of war heroes and statesmen? Scientists and business leaders? Painters and poets? Not unless the poet played a part in *Dead Poets Society*. On any given day, the list is made up exclusively of actors and actresses, most of whom I have never heard of. Today the list is headed by Robert Stack and goes on to mention comedian Rip Taylor, actor Richard Moll, musician Fred White, actor Kevin Anderson, and actress Julia-Louis Dreyfus, who turned 37.

Thirty years from now, when no one remembers her name, Julia-Louis Dreyfus will be a star of "Today's Birthdays," and that is all that Saddam Hussein really wants. We could save ourselves a lot of grief if we would just guarantee Saddam the lead story on Dan Rather for the next five years.

—*Thomas Fleming*

AMERICA'S POLITICAL AND business elite, ostensibly dedicated to compassion and prosperity, showed their true colors this winter. First came a series of investigative articles by the Associated Press in December documenting the employment of child labor in the United States. "Kids at work: Is this childhood?" screamed the headlines, and "Toughest child labor laws are not enforced." The AP series caused an instant sensation, as embarrassed federal officials and company directors expressed shock and outrage, promising to crack down on violators of child labor laws, and—in the case of Labor Secretary Alexis Herman—appealing to the general public for "help."

The source of the outrage is the evidence of children as young as four doing jobs that are either dangerous or performed in hazardous environments. Many of the children observed by the AP reporters worked with their families doing agricultural stoop labor, a form of drudgery not inherently dangerous. Shocked to discover that a social evil thought to have been eradicated was reasserting itself, none of the moralists thought to ask why employed 12- and 14-year-olds should be more scandalous than pregnant teenagers, or whether children might not be better off in the fields picking chili peppers for Paul Newman or Heinz than in school putting condoms on cucumbers. More significantly, they did not mention that the great majority of the worker-children were *immigrants* (how many of them *illegal* immigrants no decent American would think of asking).

The shock, however, was entirely feigned. The federal government has been aware of widespread violation of child labor laws for years, just as it has been aware of violations of the nation's immigration laws. In both cases, it either ignored such violations or even devised legislation to circumvent the application of its own laws. Not surprisingly, the government's explanation of its actions (or rather, inaction) with regards to illicit child labor is the same as in the case of illegal immigration: "We were *out there*, we couldn't *find* anybody!"—"We just don't have enough *people* on the *ground*!" That's strange. Don't file a tax return this year, and see how easy it is for the government to lose you.

Then came the breaking of an alien smuggling ring operating in and around Las Cruces, New Mexico. The operation appears to be just another border scam of the garden variety, in which workers from central Mexico paid a thousand dollars for transportation across the border to safe-houses in Las Cruces and Hatch, New Mexico, thence to Trenton, Georgia, and Henegar, Alabama. Why these small towns rather than New York City or Miami? Apparently because the Atlantic Finishing Company has a plant in each one. The president of Atlantic allegedly was recruiting illegal laborers through Saul and Rachel Resendiz in Dalton, Georgia. According to the indictment, Atlantic, a T-shirt manufacturer, hired its illegal employees under false names and provided them with forged documents to throw the federal bloodhounds off the scent. "This case," according to federal attorney John Kelly, "illustrates how demand created by a U.S. company has the effect of luring and recruiting Mexican nationals and others from Latin America to cross the international border." "In my 25-year history [with the Border Patrol], I've never seen a case that took people from recruitment in the interior of Mexico to a predetermined destination with jobs lined up," remarked William Veal, chief of the Patrol's El Paso sector.

Apparently, the American government and American business are colluding on a common agendum which includes importing endless streams of poor people to swell the proletariat—the federal government's equivalent of the Paris mob—and to ensure a bottomless pool of cheap labor from which "businessmen" can draw. We know now that NAFTA means the loss of American jobs to Mexico, and "free trade" the expenditure of the American taxpayers' money on the governments of Japan, South Korea, and Thailand so that Wall Street bankers will not have to sing for their supper tonight. Whether illicit child labor or illegal immigration, it all amounts to business as usual.

—*Chilton Williamson, Jr.*

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON's announcement, made during his brief Christmas visit to Bosnia, that U.S. troops were going to stay in that blighted Balkan province well beyond the initially announced "deadline" of June 1998, surprised only the naive. The only surprising aspect of the announcement was Clinton's refusal to set any new deadlines: the troops were to stay, he said, "until the job is done."

If "the job" in question is the creation of a stable, peaceful, and more or less integrated state in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the troops will stay indefinitely, because the objective is unattainable. If "the job" is simply to keep the warring factions apart, then the Clinton administration ought to stop talking about the "reintegration" of Bosnia as its objective. After the trauma

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of the latest war, Bosnia can only function as an evenly treated and finely balanced arrangement among its constituent peoples: Serbs, Croats, and Muslims. The European Union is stable because its member-nations have chosen, over a period of years, to eliminate customs barriers, passport controls, and tariffs, and to allow completely free movement of goods, services, and capital. This may happen in the former Yugoslavia, too, if America allows people on all sides to see the benefits of association and cooperation.

The Dayton Accords, as General Charles Boyd wrote in *Foreign Affairs*, just may succeed—but only if the United States puts the security of Muslims, Serbs, and Croats before their integration. Each group of "Bosnians" feels safe only with its own kin, and their self-created partition should be allowed to stand while the trauma of war fades. Meanwhile, the powers-that-be in the outside world need to rectify the gross disparity between the reconstruction aid and military supplies flowing to the Muslims and the crumbs allotted to the Serbs.

Reinterpretations of the Dayton Accords are detrimental to the prospects for peace. "Dayton" is a balanced document, carefully worded, and its application needs to be balanced too. The perception in Europe still persists, however, that the United States cares less for the letter of "Dayton" and more for the integrative "spirit" that would enable Albright and company to continue with their ad hoc reinterpretation of the agreement.

The situation is complicated by the continuing split within the Bosnian-Serb leadership between the embattled President of the Republika Srpska, Biljana Plavsic, and the loyalists of the former president, Dr. Radovan Karadzic. Plavsic is often dubbed "pro-Western," but her position is actually akin to that of Philippe Petain in the summer of 1940: accept a bad outcome and pretend you are doing it with a good grace, lest the alternative proves to be infinitely more painful. Having witnessed what happened to the Serbs in the Krajina, Plavsic knows that only a sympathetic West may prevent a repeat performance in Bosnia.

Plavsic's Western interlocutors, for their part, understand that building up a pliant Serb leader in an emaciated Republika Srpska is the only way they can veto the preferred Muslim scenario: an all-out military offensive, which would "unify" Bosnia (minus a million Serb refugees pushed into Serbia) under the rule of Alija Izetbegovic.

The Muslim scenario clearly calls for the continuous presence of Karadzic as the Bosnian Serb puppet-master. This fact would in itself provide an alibi for the "full and final liberation of the entire state territory" (in the language of the Sarajevo media). The Muslim leadership is well aware that Karadzic's control at Pale would also make it politically impossible for any Western leader to try to prevent the Bosnian Serb catastrophe.

Plavsic's desperate game plan also relies on the potential for renewed Muslim-Croat conflict if Sarajevo and Zagreb cannot agree on the division of the spoils after a Bosnian Serb collapse. No such agreement seems possible, for having finished off the Krajina, Croatia regards Muslims as a worse threat to its regional interests than its traditional Serb rivals. Croatian President Franjo Tudjman has never given up on his plan to divide Bosnia along ethnic lines. It is one of the worst-guarded secrets that the Muslim-Croat Federation in the non-Serb half of Bosnia—so lovingly nurtured by the experts at the U.S. State Department—is dead, primarily because Croatia has completed its de facto annexation of western Herzegovina.

Tudjman therefore would be loath to see Izetbegovic's triumphant army on the west bank of the Drina River, separating Bosnia and Serbia, unless his checkered Croat flag were to be raised in Banja Luka. This, in turn, is unacceptable to Izetbegovic because a two-way split of Bosnia—between Croats and Muslims—would probably prove more definite than the three-way arrangement adopted at Dayton. This he will never accept without a fight—and a speedy Muslim victory over the Serbs could ignite renewed hostilities between the victors and the Croats.

Amid such nightmarish scenarios, it makes sense for both sides to preempt it all by cooperating. It is encouraging that at least some elements within the Clinton administration have understood, finally, that the Pax Americana in the Balkans is a disastrous strategy. The resultant instability would produce a new round of bloodshed within a generation at most. American support for Plavsic and a limited Serb self-rule under Dayton could therefore be taken as a clear signal—primarily to Messrs. Tudjman and Izetbegovic—that there will be no next round in Bosnia for years to come. After all the blunders it has made in the Balkans over the past decade, the United States would do well to adopt—however belatedly—this pragmatic attitude and stick with it. Otherwise the GIs, stuck in the Balkans for years to come, may easily get in harm's way.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

THE *NEW YORK POST*'s editorial page has been one of the few bright spots in the City of Dreadful Night. Generally a steamy tabloid in its news coverage, the *Post* has nevertheless offered thoughtful and informed editorials and commentary of a mainstream conservative orientation under its editorial page editor, neoconservative Eric Breindel, and his deputy, Scott McConnell.

Last summer, the *Post* editorial page underwent a shake-up. Mr. Breindel moved upstairs to a management position, and his position was filled by Mr. McConnell, whose own column had established his reputation as a thoughtful mainstream-right critic of America's immigration policy and of such matters as multiculturalism and the kind of racial bellyaching that has enveloped the city and the nation for the last decade. It was expected that Mr. McConnell's editorial page would reflect at least some of his views.

It did—but not for long. On July 14, the paper published Mr. McConnell's editorial on Republican legislation promoting statehood for Puerto Rico, a piece that rehearsed the standard set of statistics on Puerto Rico's poverty, welfare dependency, and alien cultural and linguistic heritage. Pat Buchanan, William Rusher, *National Review*, and other critics of the Republican legislation soon published columns or articles that offered much the same facts and point of view.

Alas, such candor proved too much for Mr. McConnell's supervisors at the *Post*. In an article in David Horowitz's *Heterodoxy* describing what followed, Mr. McConnell recounted how *Post* publisher Martin Singerman, who had read the editorial and complimented him on it, stacked a meeting with disgruntled Puerto Rican leaders who commented on Mr. McConnell's ethnic background (he's Irish). Some three dozen Puerto Ricans showed up at the *Post*'s offices to grouse about the insensitivity of the editorial and the distasteful

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countenance of Mr. McConnell. (He was said to have "thin lips" and "somewhat disheveled hair," among other features that Puerto Ricans seem to find unattractive.)

After the meeting, Mr. Singerman proved to be (in Mr. McConnell's term) "rancorous," and some weeks later, Mr. McConnell was fired. Mr. McConnell remarks that his dismissal over the Puerto Rico editorial was "due to deeper shifts within American society," shifts that do not suggest a bright future for open discussion of ethnically and racially sensitive subjects. But the muzzling of frank discussion of ethnic issues is only part of what merits comment. The other part arises from the succession to Mr. McConnell at the *Post* editorial page and what sort of "shift" it signifies.

Mr. McConnell's successor is none other than John Podhoretz, son of retired *Commentary* editor Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter, both mainstays of neoconservatism. For the last couple of years, Podhoretz *fils* has been an editor of the neoconservative *Weekly Standard*, also owned by Rupert Murdoch and edited by yet another neoconservative son, Bill Kristol.

In an interview with the *New York Observer*, a liberal newspaper, Mr. Podhoretz commented on his predecessor at the *Post*'s editorial page. "Scott seemed to think if you speak Spanish, you're not part of the United States," he remarked. Mr. McConnell, he continued, "represents a 'very dangerous strain' of conservative thought that claims 'America is being weakened by corrupting cultural influences.'"

It was both tasteless and profoundly unprofessional for Mr. Podhoretz to comment on his predecessor, to characterize his views, or to discuss why the *Post* fired him, but that's the sort of behavior we have come to expect from neoconservatives. Yet apart from that, what's interesting is not only Mr. Podhoretz's remarks but also the attitude of the *Observer* to him and to Mr. McConnell.

Mr. McConnell's Puerto Rico editorial, the paper commented, was "tremendously inflammatory," and it's clear that the *Observer*, as a liberal organ, doesn't much care for the *Post* editorial page at all. The page, it holds, "could use some direction," and under Mr. Murdoch "has done little to appeal to the better side of anyone's nature." Hence, the *Observer* greets the coming regimen of young Podhoretz much as Sir Walter Scott greets Lochinvar coming out of the West.

Mr. Podhoretz told the *Observer* that "he wants the tone of the paper to be 'sharp, clever, funny, punchy and firm,' and that he is 'not an enforcer of an ideological line.'" "I'm a hopeful conservative," he assured the *Observer*. "I don't think America is going to hell in a handbasket. . . . The *Standard* was a cheerful magazine, and I'm going to run a cheerful editorial page."

So here's what's going on: an editorial page editor runs an editorial that offends a particular ethnic community, whose angry reaction scares the shoelaces off the newspaper's publisher. The editor is then fired. The newspaper then replaces the offending editor with someone who at once distances himself from his predecessor's views, denounces those views, and assures a voice of liberalism that he's different—that he's not an ideological enforcer and that his editorial page will be "cheerful" and "funny." The voice of liberalism then pronounces a warm welcome to the new editor and the "direction" that he presumably will soon impart to the editorial page.

What Mr. Podhoretz actually will do with the *Post* editorial page remains to be seen, but if he fulfills his promise to the *Observer*, the page will reflect the unwritten social contract between liberalism and neoconservatism. Under that contract, neoconservatives are to foster a mild dissent from the pragmatic content of liberalism, and to avoid suggesting that liberalism is an avenue to national suicide, that American society is in serious trouble because of the dominance of liberalism, or that a degree of cultural and linguistic homogeneity is important or desirable. In return, liberals will brand any alternative version of conservatism as "tremendously inflammatory" and pronounce Podhoretzite neoconservatism "a friendly, nuanced, ironic conservatism" (to use the *Observer*'s words).

In the process, liberal cultural hegemony is preserved, a serious radical conservatism that could lift America out of its handbasket is eviscerated, and the Dreadful Night that has so long enveloped New York City remains as tenebrous (and as powerful) as ever.

In his *Heterodoxy* article, Mr. McConnell writes that, during the exchanges between his publisher and the angry Puerto Ricans, it suddenly dawned on him that "our society had developed an expected script of white Anglo contrition and apology (President Clinton's apology for slavery was exemplary) and that I had failed to follow it." He's right, but there's more. The "shifts within American society" are not simply toward embracing the political and cultural demands of self-appointed ethnic and racial hit squads and apologizing for failing to embrace them gladly, but also toward dismissing, demonizing, marginalizing, and effectively suppressing any sounds that are not apologetic. The agencies of those "shifts" are the prevailing liberalism and its sibling, neoconservatism.

America is indeed being weakened by "corrupting cultural influences," but they're not coming from Puerto Rico.

—*Samuel Francis*

NRA "EXTREMISM"—down but not out. A year ago the National Rifle Association's internal politics, by tradition kept out of the public spotlight, erupted into the mainstream press. According to NRA management and Beltway spin doctors, a group of extremists on the NRA Board of Directors was trying to fire NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre for the sole purpose of replacing him with NRA First Vice President Neal Knox, a "no-compromise" stalwart when it comes to the Second Amendment. The NRA's p.r. campaign was so successful that even the *New York Times* got into the act, describing Knox in a February 3, 1997, editorial as "a dark force in the NRA." David Brock then covered the story with an exhausting nine-page article in the *American Spectator*, in which he described me as the NRA's "kamikaze" board member.

Though Knox took himself out of the race for NRA Executive Vice President in January 1997, NRA management succeeded in keeping him the central theme of its campaign and described, to Associated Press reporter James Rowley, Mr. Knox's supporters on the NRA board as "assassins," "henchmen," and "dissidents." LaPierre's old friend Charlton Heston was brought in to run against Knox and defeated him in the race for First Vice President by a scant four votes. Newly crowned, Vice President Heston wasted no time in assuring the world that there were indeed some guns that were "inappropriate" for civilian ownership and that the NRA's Board of Directors must be "purged" of "extremists."

There are two ways for an eligible

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NRA member to become a candidate for the 76-member Board of Directors: he can either gather 250 signatures on a petition from eligible NRA members, or he can be recommended by the board's nominating committee. On the surface this would seem to be a level playing field, but for over a decade the board has effectively been self-selected by publishing the "report of the nominating committee" in the NRA's house magazine (in recent years directly opposite the ballot).

Since most candidates for the NRA board have no public persona, the report of the nominating committee has functioned as a de facto voter guide. As a result, nominating committee candidates dominate board elections, occasionally pulling off a clean sweep. Not surprisingly, board members who ruffle the feathers of the board's power-brokers do not get re-nominated and thus stand little chance of being reelected. The possibility of losing his seat on the board is something to be avoided at all costs for most NRA directors, as "service" on the NRA board is by far the high point in the life of the average NRA director and therefore not something to be casually sacrificed out of fidelity to the Second Amendment or some antiquated notion of fiduciary duty to the NRA's three million members.

Last summer, some 1,500 NRA members signed a petition to put a measure on this year's ballot that would require directors and officers to disclose their financial dealings with the NRA (directors are not paid), prohibit NRA officers from campaigning for directors (who in turn elect these very officers), and prohibit the NRA's outside contractors from influencing NRA elections. Not surprisingly, the board voted against this amendment (by a two-thirds majority, no less). Vice President Heston, named "outstanding conservative leader" by CPAC in January, assured the board that "if they [the members] pass it, I will defy it." Not a single director who voted in favor of the financial disclosure amendment was re-nominated by the nominating committee.

This fight has now moved to the courts. As it turns out, the NRA bylaws clearly prohibit designating the method of nomination (committee or petition) on the ballot or in the NRA magazines. While management relies on an Orwellian interpretation of this bylaw as a shield to continue publishing it, already nine petition candidates have filed suit to force the NRA to obey its own bylaws. In addition, a libel suit has been filed against an NRA officer.

Should the ballot initiative fail, NRA members will have one more shot at forcing accountability on the board—the members' meeting this June in Philadelphia. Members will have a chance to pass three separate amendments to the NRA certificate of incorporation dealing with the disclosure issue as well as term limits for directors. Finally, a proposal has been made to reduce the NRA's board from 76 to 24. This last proposal may represent the best chance NRA members have to prevent the Association from becoming just another Beltway sell-out of a populist cause.

—*Ronin Colman*

EPICYCLES:

• "Steven Stealberg?": This was the question posed by *Time* last November when it reported that **Steven Spielberg** had been hit with a $10 million plagiarism suit for reportedly stealing the idea for the movie *Amistad* from a little-known historical novelist named Barbara Chase-Riboud. It was then revealed that Chase-Riboud had plagiarized a history text for her 1986 novel *Valide*. The establishment press highlighted the latter story as an exoneration of Spielberg. National Public Radio added that Chase-Riboud's status as a "relatively unknown" writer of "unknown" novels—aren't most of us "relatively unknown" compared with Spielberg?—lends her charge little credence. That's right, it's more likely that Spielberg would steal a plot from a best-seller by John Updike. And Bill Clinton would never hit on an unknown intern at the White House.

• The Man with the Golden Gun: The economic crisis set off by **George Soros**'s meddling in Asian currency markets last year continues. In Malaysia, the government announced that it would expel all foreign workers who had lost their jobs—more than one million immigrants—and it encouraged Malaysian firms to replace any foreign workers with Malaysians. Thailand quickly followed suit, announcing plans to expel up to 1.5 million immigrants over the next three years. Don't expect Uncle Sam to jump on the bandwagon; after all, only a xenophobe could believe that American jobs should be reserved for Americans.

• We Hear You're Queer, Get Out of Here: When Norwegian Cruise Lines asked the Cayman Islands for permission for the *Leeward*, a 910-passenger cruise ship, to dock at Grand Cayman, the country's minister of tourism, commerce, and transport denied the request. His reason? The *Leeward* had been chartered for a special "**gays only**" **cruise**, and he was concerned that her passengers wouldn't exhibit "appropriate behavior" while on Grand Cayman. The outcry was loud and predictable. But the best response came from Rich Campbell, president of Atlantis Events, which organized the cruise: "I find it astonishing that in 1998 you could elicit such a strong response to 900 well-heeled men who want to stop for seven hours of diving and shopping." Better watch out, Mr. Campbell: someone might accuse you of stereotyping.

OBITER DICTA: Our poetry this month is provided by **Robert Beum** of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Dr. Beum's poems and essays have appeared in the *Sewanee Review*, *National Review*, the *Christian Century*, *Prairie Schooner*, and the *Southwest Review*. The cover this month is a pastel drawing by *Chronicles* Art Director **Anna Mycek-Wodecki**. She has exhibited in Warsaw, Paris, New York, and Rockford.

COMMENDABLE

José Maria Gironella, *The Cypresses Believe in God* (Random House). A powerful and panoramic novel of the Falange and the Spanish Civil War that makes the era of European fascism comprehensible. Gironella wrote two sequels: ***One Million Dead*** and ***Peace After War***.

José Antonio Primo de Rivera, *Selected Writings* (Jonathan Cape). The leader and founder of the Spanish Falange, Primo de Rivera was the foremost intellectual inspiration of the Franco regime.

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Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Restless Natives

by Thomas Fleming

Everyne over the age of thirty has seen the movie *Casablanca* several times. It is a classic love story, in which beautiful women turn out to count for less than politics and killing Germans takes precedence over both love and marriage. In actuality, *Casablanca* has very little to do with love: the love affair, told almost entirely in flashbacks, is a dreamy adolescent fantasy that might have been scripted by Hemingway after he convinced himself that a fat old man was every young girl's dream.

Love is not the subject, but politics is, and *Casablanca* is a finely tuned piece of war propaganda featuring a *commedia dell' arte* cast of stereotypes:

The American: embittered over the loss of an innocence he can only regain by fighting Nazis, supported by a democratic entourage that includes a Negro entertainer, a Russian bartender, a Spanish chanteuse, and a Jewish waiter. (If Bogart is Everyman, then Hollywood is Everywhere.)

The Frenchman: a venal, skirt-chasing cynic who redeems his nation's honor by joining the Free French in their mythical struggle against the Germans and their Vichy collaborators (never mind that most Frenchmen were quite content with a government that got them out of the war).

The Liberal Idealist: Who cares where he comes from or what he stands for? We only know that he carries the hopes and dreams of anti-fascist humanity in his suitcase.

The German: suave, unscrupulous, and probably a coward—the epitome of the reactionary/fascist order against which all good men and true must struggle. Even his occasional good manners are a symptom of the hypocrisy of the old regimes.

The film's message is conveyed by Humphrey Bogart near the end, as he renounces Ingrid Bergman: "The problems of two little people don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world." For two people, in or out of love, you can substitute any nation, religion, gender, social class, profession, or tradition; because to make distinctions, keep a faith, or maintain a tradition is undemocratic, unprogressive, and—in a word—fascist. The film was made years before virility per se became stigmatized as fascist, but no one, in my opinion, who would give up Ingrid Bergman for the sake of a propaganda slogan can be quite the man that Rick pretends to be.

Casablanca went into production as America was gearing up for war and isolationism was being redefined as treason. Rick, before his conversion, watches impassively as Peter Lorre is dragged off to be executed. When one of the patrons criticizes his nonchalance, Rick condenses his personal code into one sentence: "I don't stick my neck out for anybody." Sidney Greenstreet is more diplomatic: "In this world today, isolationism is not a practical policy."

Intervention meant an alliance with Stalin, which meant in turn that there was to be no enemy to the left. American liberals and leftists in and out of government were justifying their praise of the mass-murdering Stalin by pretending that he was

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the lesser evil (as if that were possible), while at the same time they were lumping together French reactionaries, Spanish Falangistas, Italian fascists, German nationalists, and Nazi butchers into one sum: 666, the mark of the beast known as fascism.

Historians and political theorists have published hundreds of volumes on fascism in a vain attempt to find coherence in all the nationalist and reactionary movements that came to prominence in the 1920's and 30's. Leftists insist that fascism is a movement of the right, while conservatives are fond of pointing out that both Hitler and Mussolini were socialists.

There is some truth in both assertions, of course. On the one hand, both Mussolini and Hitler instituted economic controls of the type that are generally associated with socialism; on the other, most fascists and Nazis regarded communists and their socialist-liberal allies as the enemy. If there is any real connection among the different fascisms and nationalisms of the period, it may lie in their rejection of the bourgeois democratic order established after World War I, and while the Nazis, singing "*Die Fahne hoch*," condemned the forces of "*reaktion*," their appeal to German national traditions was nothing if not reactionary.

The Great War marked the end not just of an era but of a civilization. Forms and institutions seemed to crumble overnight, and the old aristocracies disappeared to be replaced, as models, by the flapper and the speculator. It was the Jazz Age chronicled in New York by Scott Fitzgerald and by Sinclair Lewis in the Heartland. Whatever else "fascists" may have believed, they knew what they were against, and it was the Hobbesian reign of cheapness and vulgarity, the social fragmentation that Eliot described in *The Wasteland* and that drove his friend Pound into the adoration of Mussolini.

The nearest thing to a philosopher produced by fascism was Giovanni Gentile, who became Mussolini's minister of public instruction. According to Gentile, fascism meant a reassertion of the nation and a reconciliation of the individual with the larger community in which he would be fulfilled. Unlike Marxism, a disgusting superstition that aims at the annihilation of the human person, Gentile's fascism aimed at the higher expression of the person within the nation. However tenuous or incoherent Gentile's ideas were (I find him unreadable in any language), he is clearly a reactionary and a throw-back to an Aristotelian and Thomistic (by way of Hegel) conception of the individual as an incomplete being that can only be fulfilled in marriage, family, and the ultimate community of the nation.

The two major obstacles to achieving the mystical union desired by nationalists were regional and local loyalties and political partisanship. Hitler brooded over the fact that North and South Germans are obviously different peoples—physically, culturally, and religiously—and concluded that race and nation were two separate things (an insight that American racial nationalists are still unable to grasp). Mussolini, in order to unify a divided Italy, eliminated the Sicilian language and used the army and bureaucracy as a means of uprooting Italians from their regions—a practice carried on by successor governments after the war.

In Spain, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the most attractive of the fascist leaders, regarded his country as a "universal destiny," and while (unlike Mussolini) he appreciated regional differences, he opposed political regionalism as atavistic and destructive. José Antonio deplored the clumsy patriots who made fun of the Catalan dialect or tried to pit unitarian patriotism against the local: local attachments always win out because they are more basic. Spanish nationalism, he insisted, had to be rooted in Spain's destiny, not in a set of racial or ethnic characteristics that were not shared by all Spaniards.

If José Antonio was ambiguous on the regional question, he was adamant in opposing political parties as an even more serious sign of decay than local separatism:

> Political parties are born the day men lose the sense of there being over them a truth in whose sign peoples and individuals fulfill their missions in life. Prior to the birth of political parties, peoples and individuals knew that above their own reason stood the eternal truth, and, as the antithesis to eternal truth, the absolute lie. But there came a time when men were told that neither truth nor lies are absolute categories, that everything is debatable, that everything can be resolved by the vote, and that votes can decide whether the fatherland should continue united or should commit suicide, and even whether God does or does not exist. Men split up into groups, make propaganda, insult each other, until finally one Sunday they place a glass box on a table and start filling it up with little bits of paper on which it says whether God exists or does not exist and whether the fatherland should or should not commit suicide.

In reality, of course, fascist leaders did very little to eliminate partisan politics (except in the sense of establishing their own monopoly) or to restore genuine community; they indoctrinated their subjects with nationalist propaganda designed to inspire loyalty to the regime—a technique also employed by national socialists in Germany, the U.S.S.R., and the U.S.A., where Franklin Roosevelt instituted schemes of corporatist planning far beyond anything the Duce actually implemented.

But anti-fascists have made few sincere objections to the vices of fascism. How could they, seeing that most of them have been adopted by so-called democratic states that have embraced all the paraphernalia of ultra-nationalism: pledges of allegiance and loyalty oaths, reverence for the national flag, systems of public instruction that politicize every subject including mathematics and drivers' ed, and tightly controlled national media (ABC-NBC-CBS-PBS-CNN) that script the political shadow-boxing of "free elections" at the same time they are filtering out nearly every trace of opposition to the regime.

America's own national socialists of the left have accomplished their *coup d'état* by eliminating competing ideologies of the left and right. On the left, they succeeded in demonizing their Stalinist rivals (not enemies) as traitors, and much of the hysteria over communism was orchestrated by ex-communists who had made a tactical change of ground. When my late friend Russell Kirk used to say that certain ex-Marxists were genuinely conservative, I suppose he meant only that they opposed Stalin and believed in public order. But all good communists believe in establishing and maintaining a moral and political order that is tightly controlled by themselves. When Eugene Genovese was still a Stalinist, he vigorously defended public morality, pointing out the no-nonsense approach the Soviets used against perverts and pornographers.

Communists and leftists are serious men, unlike liberals, and

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the alliance between neoconservative leftists and free-market conservatives would have been useful if only the conservatives had borne in mind that their allies were, in all matters that really count, Jacobin radicals who despise the petty patriotisms and Christian "bigotry" on which the right has been based since the French Revolution. On the strength of their anti-Stalinism, the neoconservative left was able to take over the American right. Collaborating with their rivals on the left, they were able to denigrate classical liberals and libertarians as anarchists or heartless capitalists and to stigmatize virtually every brand of traditional conservatism as a form of fascism. What was left was the gray *via media* of Harry Truman liberals and Scoop Jackson Democrats, a dull but crowded thoroughfare that can accommodate everyone from George Will to Christopher Hitchens (the gamut from A to A-prime). Right and left are separated only by a broken white line, and anyone who wants to pass is free to switch lanes.

> *Casablanca* went into production as America was gearing up for war and isolationism was being redefined as treason.

Since the 1930's, then, we have been living under a soft national-socialist regime. For a time, conservative writers, especially at *National Review*, attempted to cobble together an ideology that could tie together the various protests against the regime. "Fusionism," for all its obvious faults—incoherence and cynicism first among them—did have the merit of opposing the New Deal, but as time went by, mainstream conservatives quietly dropped whatever convictions they might once have had, and while running in opposition to the regime, they joined it.

In describing the conservative leadership in Congress as New Dealers, I intend no insult to politicians who forthrightly express their admiration for FDR without larding their pronouncements with hypocritical references to Edmund Burke or Irving Babbitt. If there were a conservative argument being made somewhere in Washington or New York, Republican politicians might well listen. But there is not. As we have pointed out in *Chronicles* over the past ten years, the movement is dead, and we shall see Latin made the official language of the United States long before we shall hear a conservative argument echoing in the halls of Congress or the seminar room of a Washington think tank.

The national socialists have won, and in their victory they have annihilated all attachments except for self-gratification and obedience to the state from which all blessings flow: family and friends, region and race, faith and profession—none has any legitimate standing in the eyes of the regime which usurps the ultimate loyalty that we owe only to God. "Let goods and kindred go," they sing, "this mortal life also," and increasingly they are tempted to throw in the next line: "the body we can kill / if only for the thrill."

Most political myths have a limited shelf-life. Who, apart from Bill Kauffman, will defend the honor of the Loco-Focos? To a generation of Americans who agree with Bill Clinton and Norman Podhoretz that America was invented in the 20th century, the 1940's are ancient history. No matter how hard they try, with films like *The Boys from Brazil* and *Marathon Man*, the anti-fascists are running out of steam. Few Americans under the age of 50 even know who fought whom in World War II—the public schools have seen to that—and, if they are under 30, still fewer care. An ex-fascist has become a dominant political force in Italy, and here in America Pat Buchanan was hardly damaged when national-socialist Bill Bennett accused him of flirting with fascism.

What hurt Buchanan was the solid shield-wall of the media, reinforced by their "conservative" camp followers. But Buchanan's issues—which might be summed up as "America for Americans"—are not going away, and as the myth of anti-fascism fades away like a nightmare in the sunlight, it is now possible, for the first time since the 1940's, for a real American right to lift up its head. Such a movement will be rooted in human nature and in nature's God, in the principles that underlie our Constitution, in the particularities of our experiences as well as in our memories of the European civilization that formed the minds and characters of our ancestors who came here as colonists and immigrants.

Any true conservative ideology will be based not on the mind of John Adams and Edmund Burke but on the deeper moral sentiments of kinship and love, patriotism and faith, ambition and revenge—"hearts full of passion, jealousy and hate." The saving grace of *Casablanca* is the sentimental song that Rudy Vallee had already recorded some years earlier. Mocking the film's devotion to the abstractions of anti-fascism, Dooley Wilson told the audience what they really believed, that the problems of two people are all there are on this sublunar world, that every ideology—Communism, Fascism, National Socialism, Democratic Capitalism—is an enemy of what Eliot called "the permanent things." The songwriter was even more to the point: "the fundamental things apply, as time goes by."

Time has gone by, and it has stranded the national socialists in their seats of power: rich, smug, and alienated. They own the government and the stock exchanges; they command the army and have an arsenal of nuclear weapons. They control the words we read and the images that flicker on our retinal screens, but try as they might, they cannot suppress the most basic instincts of human nature. The Soviets tried to eliminate competition and status, and they devastated the economy. Our own leaders have gone deeper, poisoning the minds of expectant mothers against the babies they bear in their wombs, inspiring children with hatred and contempt for their parents and their ancestors, chopping away at all the ties between husbands and wives, parents and children, friends and neighbors and replacing them all with a nexus, not of cold hard cash, but of government-issued paper.

Incapable of human affections themselves, the leaders of our regime cannot begin to realize the disgust they inspire in so many ordinary people who are starved for the things their grandparents took for granted. Like Brutus Jones in Eugene O'Neill's play, they cannot believe the primitive natives are capable of resistance, and like the Emperor Jones, they will realize their mistake only when the drums start beating in the jungles of the American heartland. c

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Fascism and Anti-Fascism

by Paul Gottfried

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

For the last several months, a war crimes trial has been unfolding in Bordeaux in Southwest France. The defendant, Maurice Papon, an octogenarian on the verge of cardiac arrest, was the subprefect of the Gironde during the Vichy regime. At that time Papon and his superior, Maurice Sabatier, oversaw the deportation of thousands of Jews destined for concentration camps and often eventual extermination. The trial of Papon is being used to underscore French complicity in the holocaust, and, as *L'Express* (November 26, 1997) observes, most of the prosecution's case has consisted of "*discours solennels*" instead of rigorously presented evidence. The trial was originally planned to deal with the misdeeds of Papon's boss, but since Sabatier inconsiderately departed this world before the proceedings began, the prosecution has had to refocus.

But the gloomy sermons are far more central to the trial, as object lesson, than some legal critics recognize. These orations are meant to drive home what the French and American media industry does not want Frenchmen (and other vestigially Christian peoples) to forget, that their societies had eagerly collaborated in Nazi atrocities and that their inherited cultures had predisposed them to such behavior. Though this complicity was admittedly more common in France than it should have been, the charges made are all too often questionable. One, featured in the movie *Le Chagrin et la Pitiè*, is that religiously indoctrinated Frenchmen ran to welcome the German armies that overran their country in 1940, as a bulwark being offered against Jews and communists. On the basis of highly selective sources, such as the pro-Nazi statements of the rector of the Catholic Institute in Paris, we are led to believe that professing French Christians happily supported Hitler's occupation and the deportation of Jews. But French Calvinists, almost without exception, protected Jews, invariably at the risk of their lives. And though the Catholic record was, on the whole, less impressive, monasteries and convents throughout France took in Jewish refugees. One beneficiary of such kindness is the present French primate, whose parents had been Polish Jewish immigrants.

Another faulty generalization is that most of France's intelligentsia were well-disposed toward Nazism. Here a distinction is appropriate that may also apply to other European intellectuals of the same period, between those who (like Louis-Ferdinand Céline) applauded the Nazi regime in all its grisliness and those who merely went along. It is the latter who were in the vast majority, certainly in France, and who form the subject of Jean-Robert and Giles Ragache's probing study, *Des èrivains des artistes sous l'occupation 1940-1944* (1988). Unlike such proudly collaborationist authors as Céline, Robert Brasillach, and Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, most intellectuals—for example, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, André Gide, and (throughout most of the Occupation) André Malraux—tried to stay out of harm's way. This also applied to the Russian Jewish artist Marc Chagall, then resident in the French village of Gordes. The Ragaches studiously avoid confusing plainly different actions—such as cheering on the Nazis, keeping a low profile, or expressing generic pro-fascist sentiments—and turning Jews over to the Waffen SS.

There is, of course, a compelling reason why most Frenchmen no longer ask who did or did not collaborate, and in what way, with the Vichy government. From June 1944 until months after the war ended, French communists (who ironically had been among the most conspicuous Nazi collaborators

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until Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union) led the way in meting out rough justice to "collabos" in areas freed of German control. During this "*épuration*," thousands lost their lives, and many more suffered public humiliation, like being beaten and spat upon or, in the case of women thought to be fraternizing with the enemy, having their heads shaved. Similar ghastly displays occurred in Italy, particularly in liberated Rome in June 1944; and a feature story in *Corriere della Sera* in April 1995 describes one such anti-fascist bloodletting. This *strage* engulfed the innocent and not very guilty as well as those who may have aided the occupying German army, and it was carried out against hundreds of Italians with the connivance of the Committee of National Liberation, which was in charge of organizing the post-fascist government. Even more ominously, millions of Eastern Europeans were killed, imprisoned, or deported between 1945 and 1948, as Stalin tightened his grip on the region in the name of "anti-fascism." In view of the ugly, bloody history attached to digging up and concocting pro-fascist dossiers, it is understandable that the French were long reluctant to renew the post-liberation witch-hunt of 1944-45.

In interwar Europe, fascist and quasi-fascist movements flourished, a situation that has attracted considerable scholarly attention. Historians have debated the differences and overlaps among fascist groups: whether, for example, the German Nazis, who claimed some affinity with European fascism, were representative fascists, or whether the Nazis were more like Stalinist totalitarians, as suggested by George Watson, Robert Conquest, and Stanley Payne. Latin fascists like José Antonio Primo de Rivera and Giovanni Bottai did not have either the totalitarian agenda or the anti-Semitic fixation of Hitler and his lieutenants. Those fascists spoke for national revolutionary movements that left their mark on non-Latins as well: both black nationalist Marcus Garvey and revisionist Zionist Zev Jabotinsky were strongly drawn to the Italian national revolution, identified with Mussolini. Well into the 1930's (Renzo de Felice has shown in his dissertation), the Zionist right both expressed admiration for and sought favor with the Duce. He, in turn, granted Jabotinsky's followers the right to build a navy at Genoa for a future Jewish state.

Israeli francophone historian Zeev Sternhell has written copiously on the background of the Latin fascism that came of age in the 1920's. Looking at the "founding generation" of thinkers and activists concerned with bourgeois decadence and the irrational sources of power and social actions, Sternhell traces back to the late 19th century a revolutionary force that was "neither left nor right" in any traditional sense. It also combined varying degrees of economic collectivism with a belief in hierarchy and a vivid sense of the national past.

Unlike Sternhell, German intellectual historian Ernst Nolte downplays the anti-bourgeois aspect of fascist movements. Rather, he focuses on their role as a bulwark of bourgeois civilization in the face of the social ferment following World War I. For all their invective against the liberal capitalist order, insists Nolte, fascists were essentially *bourgeois* opponents of the revolutionary left. The movements they created were "counterrevolutionary imitations of Bolshevism" that drew their ideals from a folkish past.

While Nolte may indeed understate the revolutionary thrust of some interwar fascist movements, he is correct to stress their bourgeois component. Fascist leaders and thinkers were recruited from the business and professional classes, and Italian bourgeois liberals such as Vilfredo Pareto, Luigi Einaudi, and Gino Olivetti generally gave Mussolini the benefit of the doubt, at least in the 20's. The major proto-fascist movement in early 20th-century France, *Action Française*, numbered many professionals, particularly physicians, in its ranks. And faced by a choice between restive socialists and clerical fascists in Austria in the 1930's, classical liberal economist Ludwig von Mises quickly made his peace with the clericalist imitator of Italian fascism, Engelbert Dollfuss.

Despite this bourgeois and occasionally reactionary direction taken by interwar fascism, its reforming image also appealed to some on the left. Most significantly, American advocates of an expanded welfare state followed English and French socialists in holding up Mussolini's Italy as a political model. In the 1920's, the *New Republic* published essay after essay by, among other contributors, Horace Kallen and Herbert Croly, praising Mussolini's socialist zeal. *Mussolini and Fascism: The View from America* by J.P. Diggins treats this love affair that large parts of the American left had with fascism, seen as an anti-capitalist, revolutionary force and as a nationalist variation on Marxist-Leninism.

This romance, however, was supplanted by an implacable hate, which has characterized the left's relation to fascism ever since. While there certainly are explanations for this hate, including the reasons most often given—that all fascism came to be identified, rightly or wrongly, with Nazism, which produced the holocaust—the standard explanation is not entirely convincing. Mass murder is not a moral problem for much of the left. When the communists undertook this experiment in Russia and Maoist China, journalists and academics tried to look the other way. Afterwards, they urged (and continue to urge) "healing" in dealing with communist killers and their accomplices, in order that we might get on with the unfinished business of atoning for right-wing oppression. Such ideologues here and in Europe do not wish to be diverted by the fact of communist genocide from dealing with the apparently real enemy, anyone thought to have been passively as well as actively implicated in fascist crimes. It is therefore not even worthy of note that at the end of World War II, Truman, Churchill, and Anthony Eden all collaborated in returning hundreds of thousands of Eastern Europeans to Stalin's rule and certain death, in Operation Keelhaul. Such behavior, which barely amounts to a footnote in most histories of the war, would seem to make the alleged crimes of Subprefect Papon pale by comparison.

It is no longer clear what fascism was or is, save for an extension of Hitlerism into the present. This extended Hitlerism is imagined to be behind every political or religious movement that is guilty of political incorrectness, from anti-immigrationists to homeschoolers and evangelical Christians. Meanwhile, the holocaust, as depicted in the *New York Times* and *Le Monde*, has been revised to exaggerate the sufferings of homosexuals (fewer than 5,000 died directly or indirectly owning to Nazi mistreatment) and to include the entirely fictitious afflictions of lesbians. This is consistent with revised definitions of fascism that make it synonymous with homophobia, sexism, and general insensitivity. As a proclaimed effort to combat such insensitivity and to expiate the national part, the German Bundestag has decided to have two separate monuments erected to homosexual and lesbian victims of the Nazi regime.

In the language of Critical Theory, "fascism" and "anti-fascism" have been instrumentalized. From being a failed model

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of political management tied to a project of cultural and national regeneration, fascism has evolved into a codeword for genocide associated with insensitive attitudes. The semantic denaturing of the terms in question was already under way by 1950, when volumes of *The Authoritarian Personality*, a study of fascist attitudes and their relation to anti-Semitism, began to appear under the aegis of the American Jewish Committee. All the contributors—among them S.M. Lipset, Max Horkheimer, Ilse Frenkel, Theodor Adorno, and Paul Lazarfeld—believed that any departure from their socialist, secularist, and gender-egalitarian outlook betrayed fascist and possibly Nazi sentiments. The "pseudo-democratic" populist danger evoked in this work has now been updated to include such telltale fascist signs as favoring restrictions on immigration and being uncomfortable at the sight of gays fondling each other in public.

"Fascist" is also now exempt from the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction. As seen in *Le Monde*'s attacks on the National Front, fascism, like liberalism, can be used in ways that contradict a once settled meaning. While granting the prevalence of Thomas Fleming's mock equation—that European populism equals fascism which equals Hitler which equals Auschwitz—one might still expect some to remember that the Nazis were engaged in far-reaching territorial conquests, not in restricting immigration or in fighting for local democratic autonomy. Are we supposed to believe that *leghisti* or *lepenistes* are incipient Nazis because they complain about the growth of the welfare state or are unwilling to expand their societies to include culturally alien immigrants?

Although these populists may be provincial or insufficiently cosmopolitan, theirs is not the evil that produced a murderous Nazi empire embracing the European continent. Such decontextualization, encountered daily in journalistic descriptions of "the new fascist threat," makes one wonder whether the slanderers have any idea of the expansionist dynamic embodied by the Third Reich or of the fascist corporatist welfare state vision. Remember the illiterate insolence of Charles Krauthammer, who in March 1992 decried Patrick Buchanan as a Hitlerite? Krauthammer pronounced the "N" word after learning that Buchanan opposed free trade and had a father who admired Francisco Franco. Such malicious pseudo-reasoning abounds in the verbal industries, which makes it unlikely that lying about fascism will soon end.

Night Piece

by Robert Beum

My two shelties lie at the door, asleep;
the half moon and the stubble sleep their way
to the equinox. Wakefulness is mine,
violence to the night, nerves and fatigue,
sorting the words for something that could live;

and if I find it? it was all for them,
those who said, Write, and gave their blessing,
those the most foolish child knew as eternal
as the acreage and its moon: grandmother, father,
teacher, far from this night as fictions.

We begin persuaded by love to try,
we gather strength, persist, sometimes break through,
but all was meant to be a love's return,
a gift, a bond—who could have thought of death
back then, when poetry was its own knighthood?

Eva, Robert, and Francis, not in this night,
you brought the last of something nameless:
words born of that lived quiet when the land
lived in the cities: the clear summer night
whispered, and what was there to do but listen?

All that has run out, memory of it
is part absurdity, and sleep should grow
under a half moon making clean, cold straw;
but the words are mostly theirs who might have read:
they mean, Work on, if only for the dead.

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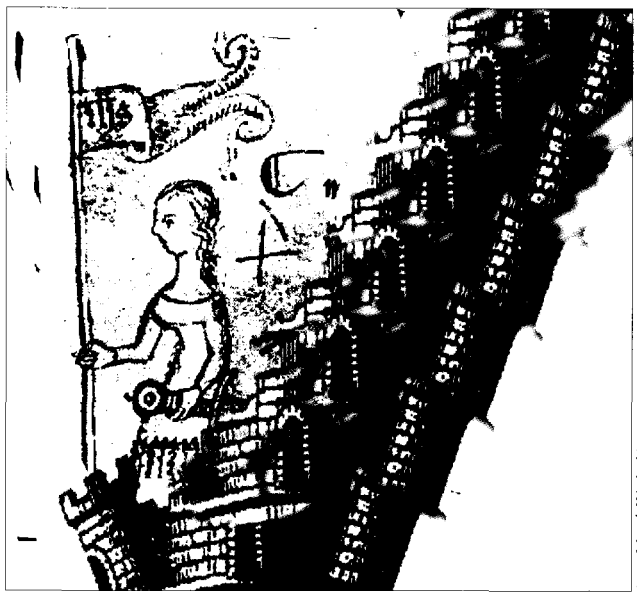
The Gascon of Europe

by Derek Turner



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Now that communism is dead, a new specter is haunting much of Europe—the specter of nationalism. In several countries, for the first time since World War II, what may be conveniently termed nationalist, right-wing, populist parties are on the verge of coming to power, or at least of gaining respectable numbers of seats in government. In Slovakia, for example, the Slovak National Party controls the ministries of education and transport as part of a six-party coalition.

What is more remarkable is the upsurge in populist nationalism in prosperous Western European countries. In Austria, Jörg Haider's Freedom Party now has a solid 29 percent of the vote, and Haider is widely expected to be the next chancellor. In Belgium, the Flemish separatist Vlaams Blok has about 12.3 percent of the Flemish vote and is the largest party in Antwerp. In Norway, Carl Hagen's Progress Party gained a surprising 15 percent of the vote in the recent general election, on a platform of immigration restriction and economic liberalization. In Denmark, the People's Party achieved a remarkable 6.8 percent nationwide vote in its first electoral outing. In Italy, despite a recent slight decline in the votes of the National Alliance to about 24 percent, parties of the nationalist right probably have majority support. (The only things that stand in the way of a right-wing government in Italy are bad memories of the rightist Forza Italia government and the profound ideological differences between the National Alliance, which wants to retain Italy's national unity, and the Northern League, which wants greater autonomy or even independence for the northern part of the country.) Even in Germany, that most *angst*-ridden of countries, small parties like the Bund Freier Bürger and the Republicans (now under new leadership) are expected to do reasonably well in the May elections. But the most significant example of resurgent European nationalism is in France, where Jean Marie Le Pen's National Front (FN) has recently enjoyed phenomenal success.

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The FN was founded in 1972 by Le Pen, a former soldier who had fought gallantly in Algeria and Indochina and who, in 1956, was the youngest deputy in France at the age of 27. For a long time the FN only obtained around one percent of the vote. In 1984, however, the FN captured 12 percent of the vote in the European elections. In 1986, the Socialist government introduced proportional representation, and the FN's 11 percent national vote was translated into 35 seats in parliament. The establishment parties then combined against the FN (not for the last time) to reintroduce the "first-past-the-post" system, and the FN was reduced to one seat in 1988. As Commandant Jacques Dore, the distinguished ex-naval officer who is the FN's Chief of Cabinet for Foreign Affairs, says justifiably: "France now has a National Assembly in which the Communists have 38 Deputies to represent 2,440,951 voters, whereas the FN, with 3,812,797 voters, has only one Deputy. It seems France is no longer a democratic country." For several years after that, the FN consistently polled between 12 and 14 percent of the vote, an important percentage which ensured that the mainstream parties were compelled to display at least token interest in the FN's central themes of national identity and independence.

The momentum really began to build when the FN scored 15 percent in the 1995 presidential elections. In 1996, the FN scored over 30 percent of the vote in municipal elections in 14 of France's biggest towns and cities, and won control of three councils: Orange, Marignane, and Toulon. In February 1997, they added to these three the southern town of Vitrolles, with 52.5 percent of the vote—despite the creation of an anti-FN "Republican Front." In September 1997, at the FN's annual festival, Le Pen announced to 70,000 FN faithful their convincing victory in the cantonal elections at Mulhouse, near Strasbourg. The FN had obtained 53 percent of the vote, and that in the first round. In the May 1998 elections "all the signs are that the party will deepen its implantation within the French political structure," as the British far-left magazine

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Searchlight has gloomily concluded.

The FN has been cautious and effective at the local level. For example, the first act of Vitrolles' new mayor, the Cambridge-educated Catherine Megret, was to reduce all councilors' salaries, including her own, by 30 percent. More recently, the council's rechristening of Vitrolles streets (named by leftist councilors after sundry anti-apartheid activists and revolutionaries) has been welcomed as well. For instance, Vitrolles' Place Mandela has been renamed Place de Provence. Although centralist by instinct, in the French tradition, the party is keen on preserving local identities. There is no sign of the FN's popularity receding at the local level, and this is certain to translate sooner or later into national power, either as part of a coalition or on its own. Prominent Gaullists like ex-President Giscard d'Estaing, former government advisor Robert Pantraud, and political analyst Alain Griotteray are now arguing that "*L'ennemi, c'est la gauche*," and that an alliance with the FN is now a necessity. The FN might even be able to make it on its own if it had to and if its present level of support only slightly increased.

The FN is fortunate to have highly intelligent national leaders, such as the Orientalist Bruno Gollnisch (the FN's Secretary-General), former Chirac speechwriter Bruno Megret (husband of the Mayoress of Vitrolles), economist Jean-Claude Martinez, and Yvan Blot (formerly head of the academic think tank, *Le Club d'Horloge*). There are several equally capable possible successors to Le Pen (who will be 69 in 1998). This fact alone shows how broad-based the FN has become.

It also has considerable support from both traditionalist Catholics and Protestants, as well as a not insignificant pagan fringe influenced by "New Right" philosophers like Alain de Benoist. However, the FN emphatically does not enjoy support from most Jews or Muslims. On the one hand, many believe that the FN is anti-Semitic, although several prominent members are Jewish, such as Captain Robert Hemmerdinger, a Free French captain and vice-president of the national committee of French Jews. The media tried to blame the FN for the desecration of the Jewish cemetery at Carpentras despite a complete lack of evidence, and their charges of anti-Semitism are lent credence, so far as the left is concerned, by Le Pen's refusal to apologize for saying that the holocaust was "a detail of history." Greater Jewish support for the FN is likely in the longer term, given Le Pen's support for Israel and detestation of the large-scale Muslim immigration which has un-Frenched whole urban areas. Jews are understandably disturbed by racial nationalism, but the FN is a cultural nationalist party.

The FN's relations with Muslims are strained because of its position on immigration and on Muslim mores, such as women wearing the *chador* in France's fiercely secular schools. Even this aspect of the FN's philosophy is not as simple as it might seem—the FN has been one of very few Western political parties willing to speak up for the sanction-hurt Iraqi people, in opposition to U.S.-inspired United Nations meddling in the region. The FN also has supporters of North African origin, such as Sid-Ahmed Yahiaoui, an FN councillor in the Ile de France.

The recent political success of parties like the FN was preceded—and has been accompanied by—an upsurge in discussion of previously forbidden (or at least unfashionable) topics, most obviously immigration and national identity. There is widespread, if inchoate, dissatisfaction with the conventional pieties. The intellectual climate is changing fast. The national consciousness, long the preserve of taxi-drivers and road-sweepers, has become respectable again, and found powerful new champions. The old ideals of the left are at last being held up to sustained, penetrating, and devastating criticism. To take just one example, six respected French scholars brought out a weighty tome called *The Black Book of Communism*, which purports to list all the communist atrocities that Western liberals do not like to have discussed. Furthermore, the authors accuse Lenin of being equivalent in his brutishness to Stalin. One of the justificatory myths of French communism (and other national brands of communism) is that Stalin was a cynical adventurer, not really left-wing in fact, who unscrupulously capitalized on the work of well-meaning idealists like Lenin and Trotsky.

The FN takes this intellectual battle seriously, unlike most Anglo-American rightists, who seem to believe that "freedom of choice" and market competition are all that a healthy society really needs. The party helps to fund publishing enterprises, such as the Institute of Social History (which produced *The Black Book*). Even the FN's youth wing takes intellectualism seriously: the most recent issue of *Agir*, the *Front National de la Jeunesse*'s magazine, featured a perceptive piece on Charles Maurras, atheist leader of the influential Catholic, nationalist, and royalist *Action Française*, founded in 1899, which lasted until 1945. FN publications are packed full of advertisements for books, tapes, CDs, videos, and even furniture and works of art.

Arguably the most important contributory factor to the FN's progress, however, has been the failure of the established parties, especially those of the left, to provide civilized and comfortable living. Unemployment is 12.7 percent and rising; privatization is causing considerable pain in what is fundamentally a corporatist country; the economic burden of the planned single currency gets ever heavier; crime does not decrease; French power is indubitably on the wane. The cumulative effect of the depressing statistics is that the old myths of the left have become unbelievable, like stories of Santa Claus to six-year-olds. The collapse in France of the old left-wing ideology (if not yet the left-wing political parties—the French Communist Party is still the largest and most Marxist in Western Europe) has utterly changed the political landscape for the better. Even the FN does not arouse the old leftist spleen; only the Communists and various immigrant organizations bother to demonstrate these days, and they can only muster small numbers.

The leftist intellectual preeminence of the decades since World War II is founded on selective memories of wartime. As René de Chateaubriand once observed in disgust, "They [the French people] must be led by dreams." The French left has certainly been led by dreams. Just as in other countries that were occupied by the Nazis during World War II, the postwar left was long sustained by an heroic myth of resistance to fascism. The romantic image created by leftist intellectuals, of gallant communist maquisards resisting whole Panzer columns of uncivilized, snarling Teutons, became an escapist reverie, serving to disguise the inconvenient fact that most French people had collaborated in order to eat, just as most British or Americans would have just got on with their lives had Britain or America been occupied by the Nazis. Tito got away with a similar trick in Yugoslavia, taking the credit for

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all the gallant work of the royalist Chetniks.

Because a very large number of conservatives had supported the regime of Petain, who for them had personified French endurance in adversity, it became easy for Charles Maurras and Maurice Barrès to be bracketed with out-and-out National Socialists like Deat, Doriot, and Céline (who thought the Nazis were too moderate). "The Liberation had been largely a revolution against the Right, extreme or conservative," as Eugen Weber notes in *The European Right* (1966). The right became associated with the horrors of Belsen, the left with freedom and patriotism. The left ended the war with an enormous moral advantage, upon which it capitalized by associating itself with the cause of the nation. Just as Stalin evoked "Mother Russia" for Bolshevik ends, the nationalist iconography of the tall man in the *kepi* was taken up by the French left, members of which were predisposed anyway because of the 1789 links between revolution and nationalism. It was this nationalist pose of the French left which made it so successful in the postwar period. As one astute French observer has noted, the French electorate is like an Edam cheese, red outside but white inside—revolutionary to obtain a pension and conservative to preserve it. The French people of all classes and opinions are deeply patriotic and protective of their national culture.

The myth of widespread, specifically anti-fascist national resistance allowed the French to save face in the age of America, that barbaric Anglo-Saxon backwater (as many Frenchmen saw it). The defeated Axis countries had their own myths to invent, but Italian Foreign Minister Count Carlo Sforza explained the postwar differences between his country and France this way: "The Italians must forget a defeat. The French must invent a victory." In the interest of inventing such a victory, there sprang up folk memories of De Gaulle, the aquiline man of destiny, broadcasting to his enslaved nation from just across the English Channel and walking through the bullets of German snipers hiding in the rafters to celebrate High Mass in Notre Dame in August 1944. De Gaulle deliberately associated himself with the powerfully symbolic Cross of Lorraine, the ancient emblem of national freedom once borne by Joan of Arc. His influence remains powerful even now. The Gaullist spell was summed up neatly by Luigi Barzini in *The Impossible Europeans* (1983): "Even those . . . who had feared and fought [De Gaulle] when he was alive, suddenly discovered they could not help but consider it sacrilegious to reject or betray his political heritage, his idea of France."

However, leftist aims and priorities changed, as a new generation of leftists came to the fore and wartime memories began to fade. The Nazis were gradually transmuted into the "establishment" and the "police"—although they still survive as a potent psychological warfare symbol of both absolute evil and absolute banality. To the more stupid leftists, there was actually no difference between the Third Reich and the Fifth Republic—an idea reinforced in their minds by the relative ease with which most ex-collaborators, like Maurice Papon, faded into the bureaucratic wallpaper after 1945 (although Robert Aron has estimated that as many as 40,000 may have been summarily executed during the Liberation). "We are all German Jews now!" shouted the middle-class students across the barricades of '68.

Such patriotic aspects of the French anti-fascist myth as existed were slowly forgotten, superseded by the revolutionary aspects. The cult of De Gaulle fell into disrepair. Liberty was dropped in favor of equality. Exclusiveness was excluded and Frenchness deconstructed. Nationalism became fascism, the preserve of warmongers and the far right. Instead, the left turned fully towards revolutionary internationalism and multiculturalism, in accordance with its instincts. This turn has helped to accelerate both France's drive towards European union and the reckless policy of admitting millions of immigrants. It has also fatally weakened the left.

The left is now increasingly—and quite correctly—viewed as the enemy of France and of Frenchness. The FN's latest recruits are very often ex-communist voters, who have been encouraged by the FN's recent shift away from Pelagian free marketeering towards a compromise between private and public ownership, in effect a move away from the recent Anglo-Saxon tradition. This shift has caused some trouble within FN ranks. A professor of economics told me at the FN festival that he thought the new line was "economically illiterate," and that there was murmuring—but then he smiled fondly and said: "No doubt Le Pen will find some way around that, too!" The French are beginning to realize that European union will be extremely expensive and that serious social problems have been caused by immigration and multiculturalism. Only the FN is willing to address these topics seriously.

If an FN government, or a government strongly influenced by the FN, comes to power in France (as now seems likely), the effects will be incalculable. Europe's political elite could easily ignore any of the Eastern European countries, Austria, or even Belgium if any of them were to elect an FN-style government, but they could not ignore France, a G7 nation with her own nuclear deterrent, the home of one of the world's great civilizations. If a country like France, sophisticated and even cynical, can adopt a doctrine of national preference, there would be nothing to stop the same thing from happening in other G7 countries. If France, which has often led opinion before, adopts a radical new philosophy such as that espoused by Le Pen, then that new philosophy will be granted a degree of "respectability," maybe even a certain radical chic.

Outside France, the effects would be felt most strongly in Brussels. Victory for an FN-style government would boost the forces of Euro-skepticism in every country, and encourage the further growth of FN-style parties. The effects would be immediately apparent in other parts of Europe, as the FN is organizing a European Nationalist Alliance (EURONAT). Recently, Le Pen or senior colleagues have visited Belgium, Germany, Rumania, and Slovakia, among other countries, and FN representatives have been regularly addressing crowds of 60,000 or more. There would doubtless be material help for parties in these countries if the FN came to power. In countries like Britain, where there is less scope for small parties, the Conservative Party would undoubtedly move closer to the British "*lepenisme*" that many Conservatives privately avow. The Canadian situation would be altered in the long term, with the Québecois separatists heartened by such a result.

In 1831, Heinrich Heine aptly described France as "the Gascon of Europe," alluding to the traditional virtues—and vices—of the colorful inhabitants of Gascony. The word has passed into English as the disapproving "gasconade." But d'Artagnan was a Gascon, and so was Cyrano de Bergerac. Gascons, wrote Rostand, creator of Cyrano de Bergerac, are "free fighters, free lovers, free spenders, defenders of old homes, old names and old splendours." What better way to describe the essential France—and her new defenders?

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The Crime of History

by Tomislav Sunic

He who writes a nation's history also controls its future—so wrote George Orwell. During the Soviet reign over Eastern Europe, every citizen knew who was in charge of writing history, especially that dealing with the victims of World War II. Anyone professing to be a Slovak, a Croat, a Ukrainian, or a Russian nationalist was immediately branded a "fascist spy," a "CIA agent," or an "enemy of the working people"; simply telling an anticommunist joke could earn one a hefty prison term. Communist journalists and court historians and hagiographers denounced free speech and demonized every sign of Eastern European nationalism. On behalf of the worldwide proletarian revolution, every attempt to retrieve a sense of lost nationhood was violently repressed. Instead of providing true body counts of the victims of the fascist terror of World War II, ruling party hacks and their servile scribes resorted to a surreal geometry in which fascist crimes were disproportionately elevated while all communist war and postwar crimes were shoved under the red carpet of historical oblivion. During the Cold War, many young Lithuanians, Serbs, Estonians, and Byelorussians, after listening to communist propaganda for decades, seriously thought that their cultural memory was genetically predetermined "never to forget" the crimes of fascism.

Fifty-three years after the end of World War II, Hitler is alive and well, and he appears to have a splendid semantic career: if not as an archetype of goodness for a few, then certainly as an historical scapegoat for the many. Modern liberal videocrats and the architects of public truth resort to Hitler and his brownshirt company every time they need to denounce a nonliberal government that dares to clamp down on illegal immigrants or international drug cartels, or tries to establish more law and order. Whenever some freewheeling public figure, especially on the right side of the political spectrum, demands more discipline from the academy and the media, he ends up in the garbage can of fascism. In the liberal gallery of bad guys, French nationalist Jean Marie Le Pen is often equated with Hitler; the Austrian liberal-nationalist Jörg Haider shares the eternal company of Herr Goebbels; some Central and Eastern European leaders are frequently portrayed as authoritarian strongmen. Even conservatives in America are dubbed racists every time they timidly voice disapproval about the fiction of affirmative action, or when they publicly oppose the flood of illegal immigrants across the Rio Grande.

Do the liberal political elite and the modern media, by constantly invoking the specter of fascism willy-nilly, trivialize past fascist horrors? Paradoxically, by resuscitating fascist crimes, they seem to banalize fascism, if not make it more attractive. For example, despite the torrent of antifascist invective and innuendo, movements and parties of the extreme right in Europe—both East and West—are everywhere on the rise. Revisionist books about the Allies and their role in and after World War II are in great demand. Of course, in Europe's politically correct environment, they often sell in the form of cloak-and-dagger *samizdat* publications from obscure if not lunatic editors.

In their paranoid fear of the possible revival of fascism, the modern liberal media ironically end up destroying their own impartiality and their own historical credibility. Thus they pave the way for the renaissance of *real* fascism.

Antifascist slanders and historical equations—Stalin versus Hitler—should not come as a surprise. After all, modern liberal democracies draw their juridical status and international credibility from their military victory over fascism. Without

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current salvos of antifascism, it remains unclear to what extent modern democracies would be able to retain their legal status and humanitarian profile. Since 1945, thousands of books critical of Hitler have been published in the West; scores of antifascist war movies have been shot; libraries of children's comics have been built, portraying every antifascist fighter as a handsome guy eating chocolate, every *Wehrmacht* soldier as a fat and ugly Kraut.

Many intellectuals have sold themselves to the parroting media, thereby forgetting the basic tenet of dispassionate academic research: free spirit. In academic discourse, fascism is always portrayed as an absolute evil, in contrast to communism, which is viewed as an historical nuisance. Naturally, there are objective reasons for the trivialization of the Gulag and for the academic dismissal of the communist killing fields. One way or another, Hitler will always be worse than Stalin—for the simple reason that liberal democracies, side by side with communist democracies, fought the common enemy of fascism and Nazism. The short-lived yet extremely important wartime bond between liberals and communists explains why in the West today few speak passionately about communist ethnic cleansing or the persecution of fascist-leaning writers and intellectuals in post-Vichy France, or about how the Allies put out to pasture some 20,000 German professors and academics at the end of the war. Only timid mention is made of the firebombing of the old library in Hamburg in 1943, the destruction of the museum in Munich in 1944, or the carpet-bombing of Dresden by the Allies in 1945. To speak openly today about ethnic cleansing by the Red Army from the Baltics to the Balkans, from Riga to Trieste, means retroactively to lay blame on those in the West who involuntarily helped establish hybrid totalitarian states in the region, including the multiethnic patchworks called Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, or the Soviet Union.

A prominent French philosopher of Jewish extraction, Shmuel Trigano, argued in *Le Monde* (March 26, 1997) that "the constant reinvocation of *Shoa*, as a sole source of global moralism, risks bringing about a birth of a new spirituality, which is supposed to confer to each Jewish sign the absolute ethical value." In other words, those who incessantly resort to the paradigma of Jewishness or use the state of Israel as the only intellectual superego might actually provide an alibi, in precarious historical moments, to those who target Jews for all fictitious evil. Exaggerated and fake philo-Semitism seems often to stem from people who, speaking in academic "ideal-types," easily turn into vicious anti-Semites. By such intellectual acrobatics, these individuals not only betray their cultural memory but also gravely hurt the memory of the Jewish people.

In Europe today, it is clearly more profitable to be antifascist than anticommunist. After all, were not Nazis and fascists the most consistent representatives of anticommunism? Such equations—that Hitler equals or even surpasses Stalin, that more died at Auschwitz than in the Gulag ossuaries—yield in practice always opposite results.

After the end of communism in Eastern Europe, high-school history texts underwent a profound change. No more palavers about friendly, good-looking communist partisans always defeating the ugly Germans. Students in Eastern Europe today are obliged to learn the body count of their own martyred people, particularly in the sensitive years following World War II. Little by little Eastern European students must come to terms with the fact that the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and other communist countries were not just liberating them from fascist terror, but were also, in turn, subjugating them under a new and often worse terror. Yalta obliges.

The supreme irony of history is that—contrary to communist paranoia—the end of communism was not the result of a CIA conspiracy, dark forces of bourgeois evil, etc. Communism broke apart because it had, paradoxically, entered into its own historiographic entropy. By the mid-1980's, not a single Eastern European citizen believed a word that communist hacks said. Even when communist scribes uttered words of truth about the decadent, crime-ridden West, out of sheer anticommunist defiance, nobody believed them. Neither American marines nor the omnipresent CIA but the vulgar surplus of communist mendacity brought about the end of communism.

The writing of history depends on time and place, and is always subject to revision. (It must not be forgotten that communist hagiography was crafted not only by communist apparatchiks but also by left-leaning scholars in the West.) But when times of great intellectual demythification arrive, when new political myths become fashionable, old political verities may be subject to revision—so argued Georges Sorel. When a political myth no longer sways the masses, the time may be right for vengeance and violence, which can attain very nasty proportions. When a victimology of one side turns into a secular religion, the other side may wait for the appropriate fruition of its own political theology. And when the body count of a people turns into show business, one must be prepared for the counterarrival of new stars in the lime-lit gallery of world sufferers. Indeed, there is nothing new in history. c

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Turn to the Mirror

by Robert Beum

Turn to the mirror and you leave the room:
comb, set, paint, spangle, and you leave the room,
brightened into that woman-space within:
rainbows in silver not in any room–

silver becomes its own space and you're there
bright leaning, bending, turning, brightness
commanding brightness—wave the comb and pull
more light and more light, promise no release,

chemise, glass boxes, bottles, brooches break
to iridescence and you comb it in:
the mirror shows the freedom to be known
rainbows in silver, and you leave the room.

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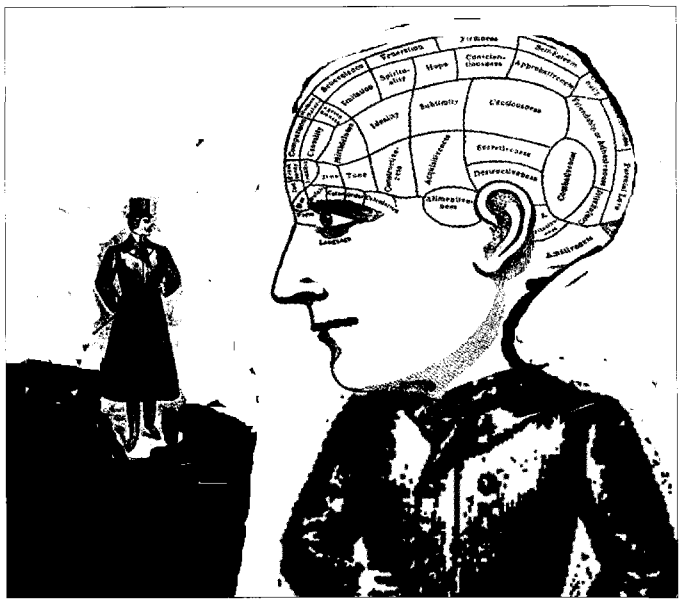
The Fascist New Frontier

by Peter Erickson



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

On December 16, 1962, Ayn Rand delivered a lecture at the Ford Hall Forum in Boston entitled "The Fascist New Frontier." She began by quoting from an unidentified political platform which demanded profit-sharing, government care for the aged, legislation favorable to small businesses, government scholarships, public health and "the Common Good before the Individual Good." She then surprised her audience by identifying this as the program of the National Socialist (Nazi) Party of Germany in 1920. Throughout her speech, she argued that the Democratic Party of John Kennedy was actually implementing fascism. In her April 18, 1965, speech before that same forum, entitled "The New Fascism: Rule by Consensus," she attempted to equate Lyndon Johnson's Great Society with fascism.

This equation carried conviction not only with her loyal admirers but also with many other conservatives. Throughout the 1960's and 70's, it was a set-piece of rightist rhetoric. Even today, one can find evocations of this thesis in conservative literature: a recent cover of the *New American* portrayed Bill Clinton standing with Hitler and Mussolini, haranguing the masses about his proposals for youth.

To understand the significance of Rand's charge, one must consider when her first speech was delivered. By the first year of the Kennedy administration, it was evident that the anticommunist movement had not completely recovered from the fall of Joseph McCarthy six years earlier. The left saw its chance. One of its favorite techniques was to link its opponents to fascism. At that time, tales about the Nazi's murder of millions of Jews were reaching the average American for the first time since the close of the Nuremberg Trials in 1946. There had been little national discussion of the subject in the late 1940's and early 50's. In many public schools, it was not taught. One reason is that the head of the Republican Party, Senator Robert Taft, had denounced the Nuremberg verdicts: "About this whole judgment there is the spirit of vengeance and vengeance is seldom justice. The hanging of the 11 men convicted will be a blot on the American record which we shall long regret." The ensuing attempt by his opponents to link him with the defeated Axis was unsuccessful, and he retained his position of leadership in his party. Even as late as 1957, in *Profiles In Courage*, Senator John Kennedy was able to praise Taft's stand on Nuremberg without fear of inviting widespread protest. Hollywood produced a movie starring Marlon Brando, Dean Martin, and Montgomery Cliff, in which a German soldier was depicted in a positive way. The sight of Spencer Tracy's visage imitating a stern but wise judge would come later.

But times were a-changin'. In 1961, a bestseller was written about German atrocities during World War II. Movies were made about them, and "holocaust" slowly became a household word. Labor boss Walter Reuther and some New Frontiersmen began to speak of "thunder on the right." Many young people started thinking that the defeated Nazis were the real enemy, not the Marxists; the latter were seen as heroes in the legal battle over segregation. Teachers of history harshly berated conservatives for opposing FDR's efforts to get America into the war. Young conservatives were baffled: How does one account for all this?

Then came Ayn Rand.

Her major thrust was against the Kennedy New Frontier and Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. She emphasized the economic aspects, arguing that—like fascism—American liberalism adopted neither orthodox socialism nor laissez faire capitalism but the middle position of seeking to control the direction of private investment.

This counterattack against the left had some success. But it is not the whole truth. Fascism did not initiate the idea of cen-

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Peter Erickson is the author of The Stance of Atlas *(Herakles Press, 1-888-492-2001), which examines the philosophy of Ayn Rand.*

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tral economic planning. In prerevolutionary France, a belief in economic controls held sway under the name "mercantilism." According to Murray Rothbard, Louis XVI's Controller-General of Finance, Baron A. Robert Jacques Turgot, was a greater exponent of capitalism than Adam Smith. But when Turgot advocated an end to certain important subsidies, he shocked the court and had to go. So critical was the Abbé Barruel of this man that, in his 1798 work on *The Anti-Monarchical Conspiracy*, he accused him of singlehandedly weakening the regime. Even American revolutionaries such as Thomas Paine advocated old-age pensions, unemployment relief, family allowances, and the like, while the proclivities of Alexander Hamilton toward statism are well known. And though laissez faire capitalism became dominant in the early Victorian period, even then those who opposed government aid to combat the Irish potato famine were widely criticized. (The British Parliament eventually allocated ten million pounds to that task, quite a sum in the 1840's.)

Ayn Rand alluded to Mussolini's idea of the corporate state, which she correctly argued was an intellectual derivative of the medieval guild. But this idea was not invented by Mussolini, the so-called founder of fascism. It was developed early in the 20th century by Roman Catholic theorists expanding on the ideas of Pope Leo XIII, who had condemned both socialism and capitalism.

To be sure, the New Deal had some features in common with fascism: Rooseveltian intellectuals admired the writings of John Maynard Keynes, and so did the fascists. Both were against laissez faire capitalism; if Mussolini had not first called it the "Night-Watchman State," some Democrat phrasemaker might have invented it. The New Deal had its Civilian Conservation Corps boys; the Nazi state, its Hitler Youth. Washington was planning for war, as was Berlin.

But that is where the parallel ends. Fascism was largely a reaction on the part of the European right against the early 20th century trend toward socialism and internationalism. It was led by men who despised democracy and who believed that monarchy was finished as a viable alternative. At that time, central economic planning was intellectually respectable, and they wanted to be the planners. It was to be autocracy by acclamation.

The New Deal, on the other hand, was a deliberate attempt to eliminate individualism and forge a different kind of nation. It placed its greatest hope in democracy, for its leaders knew that the anti-intellectual masses would happily, in return for a guaranteed bowl of porridge, turn aside the system devised by the Framers. Economic individualism was not an important political alternative in Germany, Italy, or Spain at that time; over there, only a few businessmen and intellectuals still accepted it. The fascists aimed at a dynamic replacement for monarchy. This was certainly the case in Germany. In Italy, Victor Emmanuel III was kept in power as a puppet; the real power remained with Mussolini. In Spain, the triumphant Franco was eventually able to bring monarchy back at the end of 40 years of maneuvering; there, fascism was less the replacement than the stalking horse for monarchy.

In her essay on Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, Rand concentrated her attack on government by consensus, which she saw as an attempt to evade the responsibility of formulating an ideology. Once more, there are some similarities to fascism. Since fascism was an attempt to combine certain features of monarchy with those of democracy, the result had to be somewhat pragmatic. (Mussolini had admired William James.) Gentile did not publish a systematic ideology for fascism until after Italy had surrendered to the Allies. This lack of a defined ideology was also a characteristic of the medieval regime of Cola di Rienzi (the last of the Roman tribunes), which attempted to restore the ancient greatness. And Rienzi has long been regarded as a prototype of fascism.

This lack of ideological focus, however, is not unique to fascism and its prototypes. Take the case of Abraham Lincoln, who was bound and determined to save the Union, regardless of the cost. His reason for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation was resoundingly *ad hoc*; he wanted, among other things, to encourage a slave revolt. If General McClellan had acted with the ruthlessness which Lincoln desired, he might never have written that document. In his Second Inaugural, after identifying slavery as the cause of the war, Lincoln said: "Neither party . . . anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding."

What then are the true characteristics of fascism? First and foremost, fascism was a desire on the part of the post-World War I right to find an alternative to democracy and socialism that could take the place of monarchy, which was then so obviously in decline. In Italy and Germany, fascism stemmed from the nonreligious right. In Spain, it was supported by the devout; but there, as has been pointed out, monarchy was eventually restored. Most fascists were historicists; they believed that the climate of the age—not some abstract ideology—should guide public affairs. This may not have been true of Franco and his entourage, but it certainly was the case with the two more aggressive regimes. Their primary opponents, the Marxists, were also historicists, but the latter thought that the basic patterns of history were already known and that every man was determined to be either a progressive or a reactionary. The fascists, by contrast, tended to be voluntarists; in their minds, while it is the human condition to be so enmeshed in context that truth cannot be grasped, the right kind of man can, by force of will, cut the Gordian knot and with the strands bind together a stronger people. In this regard, America's liberals are much closer to the Marxists.

The second essential characteristic of fascism is the cult of the leader. Practically, this was the problem of finding a substitute for the king. Intellectually, it was a 19th-century adaptation of Plato's notion of the typical man. The typical man is not average. Every regime—monarchy, aristocracy, polity, or whatever—corresponds to a certain kind of man, who embodies or typifies it. In fascism's version, the dictator represents his people; in a pure and unsullied form, he exemplifies the basic characteristics of the people. It would be legitimate for him to nullify an act of parliament if it were found that selfish interests had perverted the vote. In Germany, race was emphasized; in Italy, culture; and in Spain, religion.

This is not the case with American liberalism. Liberals certainly want their President to appeal to the various factions in the Democratic Party and to enough of those outside of the party to get him elected, but there is nothing grandly philosophical in this desire. To be sure, liberals are happy when one of their people has charisma, like FDR and JFK. President Clinton might brag that his Cabinet looks like America, but that is not really the fascist idea. The thought of Martin Luther King, Jr.,

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having a holiday of his own is very gratifying to liberals. But if an admirer suggested that King is the archetypical American, many would regard this as bizarre.

The third characteristic of fascism is militant nationalism. This was manifestly the case with Hitler and Mussolini. American liberals, on the other hand, are militant *inter*nationalists. Moreover, fascism identifies with the host culture, whereas American liberalism despises American culture. In a patronizing mood, liberals refer to it as "Mom, the Flag, and Apple Pie." In a less friendly mood, they speak of "Puritan Repression, Babbittry, and Racism." For a long time, they tried to hide their true convictions behind legislation flattering to the masses. But no longer.

The partisan of Rand might object that fascists also ruined their countries. But this was not the case with Franco. If he had lost, the communists would probably have ruled Spain. While it is true that Hitler led his country to destruction and Mussolini severely weakened Italy, neither man had intended that result. This cannot be said of American liberals. As has been demonstrated time and again, they despise the basic American type. Even the courtly Adlai Stevenson described this type as fat, dumb, and happy. American liberals bear more similarity to the Soviets, who clearly hated the Russian people and did all they could to alter them. For 70 years, they bragged about "The New Soviet Man," and when the new man finally emerged, he proved to be a proficient criminal.

How then should American liberalism be classified? One wonders why Rand did not follow the well-worn path of the American right and contrast democracy with the virtues of republic, as Benjamin Franklin had done. The propaganda value of linking American liberalism with fascism may not have been the only reason why Ayn Rand did not do this. She perhaps was hesitant to use something which came from classical political philosophy. In the *Politics*, where Aristotle lists the three legitimate regimes—monarchy, aristocracy, and polity—and compares and contrasts them with the three illegitimate regimes—despotism, oligarchy, and democracy—he states that the latter three substitute private interest for the common good. But Rand argued that "there is no such thing as 'the public interest' except as the sum of the interests of individual men. And the basic, common interest of all men—all *rational* men—is freedom." For Aristotle, the city or *polis* existed for the sake of the good life, not the maximization of liberty. More to the point, because of Rand's exaltation of selfishness, she could not accept the notion that, in Hitler's Germany, all were sacrificed to the self-interest of the ruler. In her mind, the principle of that regime was the sacrifice of all to the state. Whether Hitler was sincere or not was not an important question to her.

Doubtless, Aristotle's typology could be made more consistent with individualism. One could adapt some of Aristotle's words and argue that, in legitimate regimes, government is limited because law prevails over the will of men, while in illegitimate regimes, government is boundless. In these terms, a king who proceeded to the throne legitimately but behaved as a tyrant could be classified as a despot, regardless of the origin of his rule. The American republic could be distinguished from its degenerate democratic form by the fact that in the latter, the laws only pretend to be consistent with the Constitution. One could even argue that the present American government is a combination of two illegitimate regimes, oligarchy and democracy.

Nor was Aristotle's theory incapable of comprehending an illegitimate change of regime within a single country: "People do not easily change, but love their own ancient customs, and it is by small degrees only that one thing takes the place of another; so that the ancient laws will remain, while the power will be in the hands of those who have brought about a revolution in the state." But this still misses the point. American liberalism does not simply intend to rule but to destroy the United States as we have known it. Since Ayn Rand was partly aware of this fact, she may have been aware that the classical theory is not adequate for understanding that phenomenon.

> Fascism was largely a reaction on the part of the European right against the early 20th century trend toward socialism and internationalism.

With the Spanish-American War, America passed from republic to empire, as astute observers of the day recognized. William Graham Sumner wrote that the war should have been called Spain's conquest of the United States; Spain was the original imperialist state of the modern West. Theodore Roosevelt, who believed that war checked the tendency of civilized men to go soft, had not anticipated what would develop from that change in regime. Less than 20 years after the charge up San Juan Hill, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin Roosevelt would conspire with First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill to send a passenger ship, the *Lusitania*, across the Atlantic from America, stuffed with weaponry. Soon, many a young American would have his rendezvous with death.

A better characterization of American liberalism was written in 1952, ten years before Rand's "Fascist New Frontier." The author was Garet Garrett:

> Never in any world, real or unreal, has it been imagined before that Empire, out of its own pocket, should not only pay all the costs of Empire, but actually pay other nations for the privilege of giving them protection and security, defending their borders and minding their economic welfare.
>
> That indeed is Empire in a new sign. The chasm is bankruptcy.
>
> Not to make sense of it, which is impossible, but only in order not to forget that you belong to a race of once rational creatures, you have to keep telling yourself that it all began when you walked through the looking glass.

It is only by trying to make sense of it that one can understand the phenomenon of modern liberalism, not by trying to make converts by comparing it with something that liberals have carefully taught the masses to hate, root and branch. As Rand herself would have admitted, it is the Truth that should matter. c

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The Criminal State

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

"No government power can be abused long. Mankind will not bear it."
—Samuel Johnson

The Secret Life of Bill Clinton: The Unreported Stories
by Ambrose Evans-Pritchard
Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing; 460 pp., $24.95

The Strange Death of Vincent Foster: An Investigation
by Christopher Ruddy
New York: The Free Press; 316 pp., $25.00

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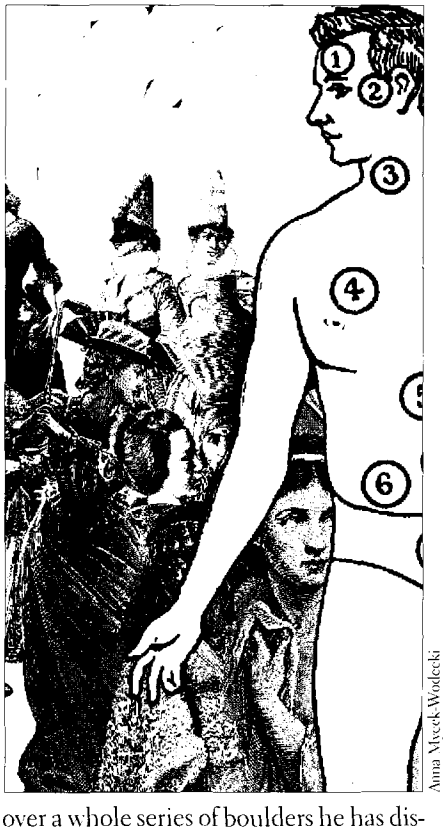
The stereotype of the British journalist—and stereotypes are usually true—has an arrogant Brit arriving in Washington, rewriting the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* for his dispatches, and spending the rest of his time in fancy bars, where dumb natives pick up his tab. His disdain for America, having begun at a very high level, only increases with time.

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, perhaps the best writer in contemporary newspaper journalism, does not fit the stereotype. As chief U.S. correspondent for the London *Sunday Telegraph*, he too could have rewritten official handouts, received either directly or through the newspapers that the government controls. Instead, putting the American as well as the British press to shame, he departed Washington to spend his time in dangerous and remote places like Arkansas and Oklahoma. After direct experience of the Clinton administration, Evans-Pritchard seems to have taken the old British saying—never believe anything until it's officially denied—as his motto. Certainly he has never accepted the federal government's word for anything, so that in the process of turning



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

over a whole series of boulders he has discovered that modern American democracy has a lot more in common with the tales of Suetonius than with modern civics texts.

In Evans-Pritchard's view, the original sin of the Clinton administration was the FBI's massacre of the Mount Carmel parishioners at Waco, using tanks, poison gas, and flames as the murder weapons. You have to go back to the federal government's slaughter of 200 Sioux at Wounded Knee in 1890, he notes, to find a similar domestic event of equal infamy. "Just like at Waco, the [Indian] victims were demonized as sexual deviants. Some methods never change." Indeed, "every salient fact put forward by the Clinton administration about Waco is a lie." Nor has he forgotten, or forgiven, Bill Clinton's statement that, "I do not think the United States government is responsible for the fact that a bunch of fanatics decided to kill themselves."

The Oklahoma bombing was different, of course. The victims were mainly federal employees, and the incident affected the American public differently as well. In fact, as Clinton told reporters riding with him on Air Force One after the 1996 elections, the bombing, by temporarily derailing the anti-government movement, served to get him reelected. But was the official story of Oklahoma City correct? To many observers, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols—while clearly guilty of something—had the air of patsies about them. It is in this area that Evans-Pritchard does his most important work.

The prosecutions, he shows, resembled Star Chamber proceedings, in which evidence of involvement by the two Waco agencies—the FBI and BATF—was suppressed. Evans-Pritchard agrees with the widespread speculation that the bombing may have been a government operation originally designed to test the resources of the underground paramilitaries and to discover just how far they were prepared to go. Or it may have been designed to smear the American right in its entirety. Apparently the bombers were to be caught redhanded at the last minute. That is why the bomb squad was seen at the Murrah Building by many witnesses early on the morning of the explosion. But somebody made a bad mistake.

Not everyone paid, of course. No BATF agents were in the building on the day of the bombing, despite the local BATF head's phony tales of his own heroism. Why weren't they there? Because the bombing was probably a failed sting operation—as a lawsuit by 300 surviving family members claims.

Working with Oklahoma reporter J.D. Cash, BATF informant Carol Howe,

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and the late Glen Wilburn and his wife Kathy (whose grandsons had been killed in the bombing), Evans-Pritchard shows that a commune of neo-Nazis at Elohim City, Oklahoma, though implicated in the bombing, was nevertheless protected by the FBI, despite the fact that the FBI was informed by several witnesses that the commune was sheltering a man whose looks and activities match those of John Doe II exactly, as well as another man, a mysterious illegal alien. A former German military intelligence officer and bomb expert named Andreas Strassmeir, this fellow was probably the agent provocateur, and doubtless also protected by the FBI.

Anyone who has hung onto the Efrem Zimbalist, Jr., view of the American political police will have lost it after finishing these two books. As the authors demonstrate, agents of the FBI, far from protecting the citizenry, serve the state by any means necessary, intimidating witnesses to change their stories to conform with the official line and smearing them when they refuse to do so. The FBI lab is not the only hotbed of bureaucratic crooks. Similarly, any reader who persists in regarding the mainstream media as "adversarial" will be disabused as well. These institutions are actively on the side of the state, defending it vociferously and attacking anyone who questions its moral innocence. The problem is not liberal but governmental bias. Just when the media seem about to do the right thing, they invariably stop short. ABC's 20/20 was prepared to run a segment on Elohim City, but pulled it at the last minute. When assistant producer Roger Charles protested, he was fired. The story had to be suppressed, he was told, because it would "bring the country down" and lead to the "abolition of the ATF."

Meanwhile, at a time when the FBI was conducting 25,000 interviews about the bombing, Strassmeir was not included among the interviewees; indeed, he was allowed to leave the country. He had a superduper U.S. intelligence rating as well, later erased from the INS's computers. But he was clearly wracked with guilt, and what he admits to Evans-Pritchard after many interviews is astounding. In a recorded phone conversation, Evans-Pritchard tells Strassmeir, then in Germany, that there comes a time in a botched sting operation when the plant has to go public to save his own skin. "How can he?" shouts Strassmeir. "What happens if it was a sting operation from the very beginning? What happens if it comes out that the plant was a provocateur? . . . What if he talked and manipulated the others into it? What then? The country couldn't handle it. The relatives of the victims are going to go crazy. He's going to be held responsible for the murders of 168 people. . . . Of course, the informant can't come forward. He's scared shitless right now."

Exploring Arkansas, which a relative of former governor Lawrence Rockefeller once told me had the brutal and deadly politics of Montenegro, Evans-Pritchard has turned up interesting facts. Clinton clearly had a personal involvement with cocaine (he found it useful in attracting underage girls) and perhaps a professional one as well. Certainly Dan Lasater, his confederate in coke, women, and song, was a major importer of the drug, as were the CIA-Contra gun suppliers at the infamous Mena airport. There are even interesting connections among Clinton, George Bush, and Ollie North.

More murders occurred in Clinton's Arkansas circle than the mainstream media have discussed, crimes that went unpunished thanks to corrupt cops, judges, and medical examiners. One of these examiners, an Egyptian immigrant, was eventually promoted by Governor Clinton after the immigrant doc ruled that Ma Clinton, a nurse-anesthetist who, according to the author, had perhaps been drinking when she cut off oxygen to a 19-year-old girl's brain during routine surgery, was not at fault in the resultant death. The same examiner also helped cover up the horrendous stabbing deaths of two teenage boys who inadvertently came upon one of Lasater's cocaine drops—a deed that, according to Evans-Pritchard, our President may have approved as well.

So far we have only skimmed the surface of Bill Clinton's Arkansas as explored by Evans-Pritchard in this extraordinary book, which also considers the apparent murder of the President's Arkansas crony, Vincent Foster. The expert on that case, however, is another star reporter, Christopher Ruddy of the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. The official story of Foster's death, Ruddy proves, is entirely phony, the cover-up having been orchestrated by executive branch operatives like Bernard Nussbaum, Webster Hubbell, and Craig Livingstone, with the assistance of the White House political police, the FBI.

Ruddy is cautious in stating his conclusions, but it is clear from his book and Evans-Pritchard's—and also from the work of the redoubtable Texas attorney Hugh Sprunt, a source for both authors—that Foster was not clinically depressed. His body was not found where the Park Police claimed it was. The firearm—a classic, untraceable drop weapon commonly used by crooked cops—was not the murder weapon. Foster's corpse had an additional wound on the neck. The "suicide" note was forged. White House operatives, with the help of the MIG GROUP safe-cracking division of the Secret Service, went through Foster's files and his safe, removing materials Bill and Foster's alleged longtime lover, Hillary Clinton, did not want seen.

Witnesses who testified to having seen strange men going through Foster's car at Ft. Marcy Park or who otherwise challenged the official story were smeared by the FBI as homosexuals or adulterers. The autopsy was a joke, as was the entire Park Police investigation. The Starr and Fiske reports were cover-ups. And that, as Ruddy shows, is only the beginning.

It is clear that Clinton knew about his "close friend's" death before giving a happy, hour-long TV interview with Lar-

The Secret Life of Bill Clinton: The Unreported Stories

On the American Elite:

"The American elite, I am afraid to say, is almost beyond redemption. Moral relativism has set in so deeply that the gilded classes have become incapable of discerning right from wrong. Everything can be explained away, especially by journalists. Life is one great moral mush—sophistry washed down with Chardonnay."

On Truth and Consequences:

"The ordinary citizens, thank goodness, still adhere to absolutes. A lie is an abomination. A vow is sacred. Unjustice cannot be excused."

—*Ambrose Evans-Pritchard*

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ry King. Clinton later appeared with a sad face to comfort the widow, reminiscent of the famous shot of the President leaving Ron Brown's funeral, laughing with an aide until he spied a video camera aimed at him, whereupon he wept crocodile tears. As for the late lamented Secretary of Commerce, Ruddy has recently uncovered the fact—confirmed by two Army pathologists—that Brown, who may have been about to save his own skin at Clinton's expense, apparently did not die of his plane crash injuries, having suffered a .45 caliber bullet wound to the head and a "lead snowstorm" in his brain. The Army, which refused to have an autopsy performed at the time, claims that the X rays showing the bullet fragments, although taken on a new machine, were defective and that later films show no such fragments. However, the X rays allegedly showing no lead in Brown's brain have "disappeared." (Christopher Ruddy has a superb website, by the way, for the latest on all of this and more: *www.ruddynews.com*).

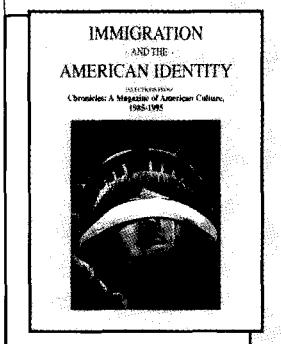
Ambrose Evans-Pritchard's and Christopher Ruddy's books have been smeared, even in the conservative press, as the work of loons. There are, broadly speaking, two opposing ways to view the state. The first sees it as a sodality of public-spirited types dedicated to the commonweal and the national interest. Since these people are thought truly to represent us—indeed, in a democracy, to *belong* to us—they are presumed as well to have our best interests at heart. In pursuit of these interests they feed the hungry, educate the young, and punish evildoers here and around the world. The American government, according to this way of thinking, is a veritable font of truth. Virtually never has it done wrong, and then only by mistake.

The opposing view holds the state to be a criminal cabal. In order to gain the consent of the governed on which all states rely, it pretends a hypocritical concern for the public welfare. The only difference between private thugs and the state, as a 19th-century anarchist pointed out, is that garden-variety crooks do not style themselves the Honorable—or tell us, as they demand our money or our life (sometimes taking both), that the forfeiture is for our own good. In this view Washington, D.C., to keep the public from catching on to the racket of government, employs the lie as a basic tool of governance.

Messrs. Evans-Pritchard and Ruddy are not anarchists. Indeed, they are not even radicals. Their work takes a close look at several landmark events in the history of one American presidential administration. The result, a hammer blow to the public-interest notion of government, offers additional reasons for dismantling the government of the United States as it exists today.

Thus left-liberal and neoconservative publications have dismissed *The Secret Life of Bill Clinton* and *The Strange Death of Vincent Foster* as "conspiracy-minded"—a phrase typically employed to describe anyone who concludes that our government is up to no good. Like most other politically driven smear terms, it should in fact apply to anyone who simply keeps his eyes and ears open. c

REGARDING IMMIGRATION...



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A Democratic Politician

by Srdja Trifkovic

"An historian is a prophet in retrospect."
—A.W. von Schlegel

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The Hitler of History
by John Lukacs
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;
279 pp., $26.00

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Wir sind mit Hitler noch lange nicht fertig ("We are nowhere near done with Hitler"): the warning by two contemporary German historians provides an apt opening line to John Lukacs's delightful book. His "history of the evolution of our knowledge of Hitler" seeks to explain why, as we approach the new century, Adolf Hitler continues to haunt and fascinate us, why—more than five decades after his death—he remains our troubling contemporary.

The Hitler of History is an eloquent and authoritative survey of other historians' attempts to deal with Hitler the man, the political leader, and the military strategist. While it is a "history of [Hitler's] history, and a history of his biographies," it also contains insights into historiography, epistemology, intellectual history, and the philosophy of history. In spite of the author's intentions, but perhaps inevitably so, *The Hitler of History* also ends up being a book *about* Hitler. In just under 300 pages, Lukacs shows us why Hitler remains a *moral* problem—a problem far deeper and intractable than the current academic and popular usage of the term "moral" would imply. Lukacs knows that the purpose of historical knowledge is not mere accuracy, but *understanding*.

How close are we, then, to the "historicization" of Hitler, as opposed to the facile demonization of him? Lukacs makes it clear that the task is far from over, and that "historicization" has more to do with how we deal with the problem of our own moribund civilization than with the record of the Führer and his times. Hitler cannot become an *historical figure* as long as the dilemmas and neuroses of his century continue.

Lukacs's survey is necessarily selective (Hitleriana has spawned hundreds of titles in all languages, without much sign of abating) and it focuses mainly on a dozen or so German authors who have made their mark since the 1960's. With a couple of exceptions, most non-German historians are given short shrift, either because their work is obsolete, because it contributes little to our understanding of the period, or because it is biased and methodologically flawed.

The "early" Germans—those writing in the 60's—are boringly conventional (Heiber), fairly superficial (Gisevius), or devoted to unearthing voluminous empirical data at the expense of "understanding" (Maser). With the cumbersome Hillgruber, who exploits the antiquated academic apparatus of "professional objectivity" to conceal a nationalist-conservative agenda, we encounter the first hint of the "dual war" theory. This "doubtful thesis, to say the least" (as Lukacs calls it) asserts that from September 1939 until June 1941 Germany was waging an *europäisches Normalkrieg* against the Western democracies that only turned nasty with Operation Barbarossa. Lukacs is more sympathetic toward Percy Ernst Schramm, an elegant North German patrician who could have fit comfortably into the setting of *The Magic Mountain*, or the smoking room of an English country estate. Writ-

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ing in the early 1960's, Schramm exposed the fallacy—and the danger—of a then-common tendency to trivialize Hitler. Ernst Deuerlein's *Hitler: A Political Biography* (1969), which Lukacs calls "the best short Hitler biography," is also well-written. Deuerlein pondered a key problem —"how Hitler had been possible"—that also preoccupied Sebastian Haffner, who asserted the unquestionable unity of Hitler with the German people in the 1930's. With the onset of the 1980's, a new generation of scholars emerged, having no personal memories of the Third Reich. This period was marked by the debate between "Functionalists" and "Intentionalists," between those who regard Hitler as an opportunist and those who regard him as an ideologue. Lukacs's implied conclusion, with which there can be little argument, is that the Nazi hierarchy may have been "functionalist" in form and outward appearance but it was always "intentionalist" in substance (even though the nature of that intent was concealed behind the multiple layers of Hitler's secretiveness).

The second half of the 1980's brought us the famous (in Germany, at least) "Quarrel of the Historians," no longer a civilized debate but a bitter controversy over the nature of National Socialism and its proper place in the context of European history. The "neoconservative" camp in the dispute (Ernst Nolte and Andreas Hillgruber, later joined by the young and talented Rainer Zitelmann, and supported "from without" by Joachim Fest), made a number of claims that threatened to shatter the acceptance of a general consensus sought for decades by the left-liberal, anti-nationalist German academic and intellectual establishment represented by Jurgen Habermas.

Nolte's thesis was that Nazism must be understood as a reaction to Soviet Bolshevism: the Gulag preceded Auschwitz, and indirectly led to it. Hillgruber further developed his thesis of "two wars" (conventional, 1939-41; apocalyptic, 1941-45) to the point where he sought to present the desperate German struggle against the Red Army in 1944-45 as a doomed epic that had developed—in spite of Hitler, rather than thanks to him—into an all-German defense of Western civilization against Eastern barbarity. While the older authors implicitly sought to separate the story of the Third Reich from Hitler, the uncompromising young newcomer Zitelmann deepened the split by asserting that Hitler was truly a *revolutionary*, that his aspirations and visions were essentially *modern*, and that "[his] thinking and actions were essentially much more rational than hitherto accepted." (Lukacs's warning that Zitelmann's views contain the seeds of "at least a partial rehabilitation" seems to be confirmed by the latter's recent willingness to become an advocate of ultra-nationalist positions that are alarming, and not only to Germans.)

Lukacs's ensuing treatment of the dilemmas posed by Hitler's biographers and historians is masterly and confident. Lukacs regards Hitler as the ultimate refutation of the economic interpretation of history and of the notion that history is made not by individual persons but by underlying social conditions and economic forces. His argument: the war would not have come in 1939 except for Hitler. Far from being "mad," Hitler "was a normal human being" whose inclination to evil, while reprehensible, was itself normal. His evil intentions—most notably the killing of European Jews—"were spiritual, not physical," which only makes the deed more reprehensible. The problem is complicated by the great popularity of the Führer, who "may have been the most popular revolutionary leader in the history of the modern world. . . . [He] belongs to the democratic, not the aristocratic, age of history."

Given Lukacs's acceptance of Hitler as a "revolutionary" in his ideas, his rhetoric, and his plans and their execution, the reader is puzzled by the author's uncompromising dismissal of the view that Bolshevik brutality affected the rest of Europe and provided an impetus for later Nazi outrages, since the horror of Lenin's and Stalin's Russia cannot be divorced from the totality of Western experiences in this century. Contrary to Lukacs's implication, Russia under communism was an eminently European phenomenon, not a marginal episode that can be confined to the dark heart of the Eurasian steppes.

Ideologically inspired mass murder—symbolically injected into Russia's weakened body-politic by the Kaiser's sealed train from Switzerland—was neither the invention nor the unique prerogative of a brutal, Asiatic Russia needing to be judged by standards different from those of the rest of Europe. Lukacs invokes the Russian tradition of Ivan the Terrible to dismiss Fest's and Nolte's linkage; but the exact or near-contemporaries of Ivan slaughtered the burghers of Antwerp with a papal blessing in 1585, brutalized Germany and Bohemia during the Thirty Years' War, and sacked Drogheda under the banner of the New Model Army. Almost two centuries later General Westermann, a client of Danton, triumphantly reported to the Convention that "the Vendée is no more. . . . I have burned it in the woods and marshes of Savenay. . . . I have trampled their children beneath our horses' feet; I have massacred their women, so they will no longer give birth to brigands; I do not have a single prisoner to reproach me. I have exterminated them all. Mercy is not a revolutionary sentiment!" In 1794, at the harbor of Rochefort, thousands of nonjuror priests were slowly starved to death on the decks of prison hulks. At Angers, thousands were summarily shot. But the "infernal columns," the *Einsatzgruppen* of their day, could not accomplish enough killing by conventional methods. A solution was successfully applied at Nantes, where thousands were systematically drowned—the first attempt at industrialized and "depersonalized" mass murder in history.

The list goes on, but the point is clear: Western Europe cannot be judged "by its own standards" because those standards are not qualitatively different from those of its Slavic-Orthodox cousins. Lukacs is right to concur in the description of Hitler as a revolutionary, but he is mistaken in denying the link between 1789, 1917, and 1933 (or, more aptly, 1942-45).

The decline and ultimate collapse of the religious impulse among Europeans, from the Atlantic to the Urals, created a gaping hole that was filled by ideologies uninhibited by religious restraints and motivated by the will to power. Lukacs aptly describes Hitler as "an idealist determinist" who believed in the supreme importance of will and the supreme power of ideas, and acknowledges that the Hegelian *Zeitgeist* may have assisted Hitler's rise to power. Lukacs believes nonetheless that the very fact of his taking power enabled Hitler to create his own *Zeitgeist*, and argues that "contrary to Hegel or Dostoyevsky, what men do to ideas is more important than what ideas do to them."

But is it? Lukacs recognizes the Ger-

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mans' obsession with the relationship between the word and the world, but one wishes he had dwelt longer on the centrality of this obsession, since it lies at the heart of the phenomenon of Hitler, as well as of German philosophy, literature, and politics. Thomas Mann tells a story of a town devoid of people—but all the church bells are ringing. Who is ringing the bells? Why, "the spirit of storytelling," Mann triumphantly asserts. But are they *real* bells? *Ach*, once we have *read* about them, they *do* become real: they have been brought into existence as a conceptual province of reality.

As this terribly important strain in the German tradition suggests, the entire world (except for that insignificant fragment of it directly accessible to our sensory examination) only exists as an assemblage of ideas. In that assemblage Mann's town is as real—if not more so—than, say, Cincinnati, which undeniably "exists" but which we remain unaware of until some gruesome crime or memorable sports statistic hits the headlines. Thus Field Marshal Kesselring argued—as late as March 1945!—that Germany's ultimate victory could be predicted with "mathematical precision": since defeat was impossible, its victorious alternative was unavoidable, *Wunderwaffen* or no *Wunderwaffen*. These fellows would not allow mere facts of a lower order to get in the way of their nominalist reality.

This psychotic paradigm seems to hold the clue to a problem with which neither Hitler's biographers nor Lukacs deals satisfactorily: the assorted malaises of Weimar politics and society notwithstanding, how could the *Generalität* remain so supine? Why were the *Wehrmacht* upper brass so pliant in the face of ultimate disaster? Was it just the terrible perversion of an oath-based loyalty that annulled their duty to their country, to themselves, and—perhaps more importantly—to their caste?

Lukacs's survey helps us understand why the generals failed to resist Hitler's dictatorship while the going was good. It nevertheless leaves open the question of why they went along with his disastrous interventions in military administration after the crisis of December 1941—from his insane obsession with boosting the paper numbers of divisions contrary to battlefield reality to his refusal to allow relatively intact units to retreat from Stalingrad, Tunisia, or Kurland. Lukacs is right not to absolve Hitler on account of "madness"—he was bad, rather than mad—but he ought to have dwelt more on the postmodern quality of the Führer's allegedly "rational" actions based on nominalist assumptions. It simply will not do to bypass the problem by asserting that "hubris is a fault of character rather than of vision; and Hitler was not blind."

After July 1940, but more acutely after December 1941, Hitler was strategically bankrupt. "His underestimation of enemy potentialities, always his shortcoming, is now assuming grotesque forms," noted General Halder. He micromanaged army groups, divisions, even regiments; he refused to speak to Jodl; he shouted at, and otherwise quarreled with, all his commanders-in-chief, all his chiefs-of-staff, most of his field-marshals and sector commanders. His generals could not confront him because they had also fallen victim to the source of German strategic hubris: in the words of Geyer, "the conviction that the Germans could rule others in lieu of governing themselves."

When at last a group of senior staff officers (significantly *not* field commanders) steeled themselves to kill Hitler, theirs was a pragmatic rebellion against nominalist determinism, not a true moral choice. Lukacs is therefore giving the plotters too much credit when he refers to Count Stauffenberg as a "hero." After reading *The Hitler of History*, one retains the impression that the July plot was born not out of its perpetrators' realization that Germany had unleashed unspeakable misery upon Europe (and itself) but out of their well-grounded fear that the *Vaterland* was now threatened with the dreadful bill for its actions.

In an ironic reversal of the claim of one of their modern detractors, the plotters seem to have been "morally responsible" (in terms of their sense of responsibility for Germany's vitally threatened national interests) rather than "responsible moralists." The mundane fact remains that Stauffenberg failed to kill Hitler because the plot required his survival in order to handle the *Putsch* in Berlin after Hitler's death. Hitler could have been killed any time before July 20, 1944, had one of the plotters been willing to accept his own death as a price for the deed. The plotters ended up with the worst of both worlds: they were as unworthy of their endeavor as they were of their oath of loyalty.

The lesson of Hitler is that the pursuit of global power for its own sake is the Great Temptation in human history, the path of ruin that winds from Xerxes, the Persian King of Kings, to Napoleon and Hitler. This lesson is yet to be absorbed by America's current globalist "elite," as we stand on the threshold of a new Dark Age, deluding ourselves that "the West has won."

As for the dangerous future, to which Lukacs makes reference in his conclusion, Hitler is already revered "by at least some of the New Barbarians," notably in the Islamic world; he has been, in fact, ever since the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem affixed the Crescent to the SS mast in 1943. But how can the great and good John Lukacs raise an effective alarm—as an historian, if not as a prophet—while so many Americans remain ignorant of their own history, let alone that of other peoples? Who will listen when men like Lukacs warn that our rulers are doing around the world today what Athens did after leading the Hellenic coalition against Persian aggression—attempting to convert leadership into pseudoimperial hegemony? The result, as we know, was the destruction of Hellas as a political and military factor for all time. The warning that the same is in store for America, Europe, and the shrinking remnants of Christendom is long overdue. The banner of "democracy and human rights" will not save us, just as the fact that Hitler was a "democratic" populist did not save Germany. ◁C

The Hitler of History

"Hitler insisted that he was not a dictator. Dictators were petty tyrants, often dependent on small coteries supporting them by force. He saw himself as the leader not of a determined minority but of a majority. 'We National Socialists are the better democrats,' he said several times during the years 1933-1935. He agreed with Goebbels when the latter pronounced (in 1934) the existence of a 'new Germanic democracy.'"

—*John Lukacs*

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Massive Reductions

by Jesse Walker

Downsizing the U.S.A.
by Thomas A. Naylor and William H. Willimon
Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans; 289 pp., $25.00

◆

The great political project of our time is the rebellion against gigantism: against the state, corporate, and professional leviathans that strangle individuals and communities. Of all the ways to injure those monsters, the single least effective one may be to write a book about it. Or, at least, to write the book that Thomas Naylor and William Willimon have written.

I don't want to be unduly critical of this volume. After all, I agree with most of it. Its chapter on schools is sensible and forceful. Its discussion of big charities is biting and spot-on. And its investigation of religion actually breaks new ground. Relatively few decentralists have called for reversing the bureaucratization of faith, despite the living examples of deprofessionalized congregations all around them, from foot-washing conclaves of Primitive Baptists to spell-casting covens of Wiccans. (If that's not all-encompassing variety, I don't know what is.) Naylor and Willimon show that big religion is facing the same crises as big government and big business, for much the same reasons, and they do this so insistently that even nonbelievers (such as me) will emerge sharing their concerns. But the book also has its share of problems, each of which overwhelms the authors' exemplary intentions.

First, and perhaps worst, is its banal, platitudinous prose. This may seem like a minor trouble, but it allows sloppy thinking to sail through under the cover of cliché. "Our nation has lost its way," begins one passage.

> We suffer from meaninglessness, which in turn leads to separation, alienation, and ultimately to despair. Our political, spiritual, academic, and business leaders have no vision of the future. We have no sense of connectedness. The specter of nihilism looms over us, as evidenced by the Los Angeles riots, the bombings in Oklahoma City and Atlanta, the Unabomber, the O.J. Simpson trials, and the Heaven's Gate cult.

By this point, the typical reader's eyes will have glazed over, lulled into suspended animation by the cascading mush. He thus might not notice that those all-too-familiar phrases do not, in this context, make much sense. How, for example, are the Heaven's Gate suicides a sign of "nihilism"? The cultists certainly believed in something, albeit something destructive and absurd. The same goes for the Unabomber, and for whoever attacked the federal building in Oklahoma City. And why mention the O.J. Simpson trials? Members of the first jury have offered many reasons for their decision to let Mr. Simpson go free, but not one has declared, "Nothing is real. Everything is permissible." As for the second jury, I don't see why Naylor and Willimon bring it up at all. This is not a coherent list of nihilistic events but an almost random list of recent news stories, selected more for familiarity and fright value than anything else. Unfortunately, it is typical of this book. Cliché follows cliché as winter follows fall; a single paragraph contains the phrases "we must act now," "we must act decisively," "it's later than we think," "the stakes are particularly high," and "for the sake of our children." Egad.

There are also many inconsistencies in the text. A little self-contradiction isn't necessarily a bad thing: Naylor and Willimon are large; Naylor and Willimon contain multitudes. But why should a book that celebrates the messy diversity of local disorder offer passages like this one?

> Houston, Texas, with its crazy-quilted hodgepodge of beautiful residential neighborhoods, churches, schools, and universities laced with unsightly oil refineries, petrochemical plants, strip malls, and convenience stores, is the quintessential example of the result of a combination of unlimited growth, no zoning laws, and a Pollyanna "anything goes" attitude—uncontrollable, dehumanized, concrete-and-steel chaos.

Heaven knows, Houston has its problems, many attributable to overcentralization. There is, most obviously, the constant influx of federal dollars. Until recently, it suffered from an overreliance on a single industry, oil. But chaos is precisely its charm, especially from a decentralist point of view. If Naylor and Willimon disagree, they ought to explain why.

A similar problem comes when they stick up for the many small businesses that have gone belly up because of competition from Wal-Mart. I hold no brief for the Walton empire, but I can't help noting that many of the business practices Naylor and Willimon praise—employee participation in management, for example—are partly in force within the Arkansas-based chain. Does this preclude Wal-Mart-bashing? No. Should it be addressed? Absolutely.

Then there are the many places where Naylor and Willimon simply fail to prove their claims. First they say that corporate America is overgrown. No argument here. Then they praise small, environmentally sound enterprises like Ben & Jerry's. Who wouldn't agree? And then they declare that as the first group of businesses downsizes, the second will pick up the slack. I wish that were so, but it will take more than mere assertion to prove it.

Finally, the book makes a striking omission. Naylor and Willimon exalt the rural at the expense of the urban; it is in the countryside, they say, that the prospects for human-scale living remain the strongest. Maybe so. But decentralization is not incompatible with metropolitan living, and the authors are wrong to describe country life as "our last hope" while there remains at least some promise for revivifying the cities. I would have liked to learn the case for municipal federation, for transforming cities

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into confederations of self-governing neighborhoods. Given economic conditions, that's no more utopian than a return to agrarian glory, and it's more inspiring than Naylor and Willimon's weak proposal that cities simply set population limits and give people incentives to leave. (To their credit, they do discuss the advantages of neighborhood secession.)

I don't mean to sound so relentlessly negative. And as I said, there's a lot here to like. No book that bashes AT&T, the welfare state, and the Pentagon is all bad. It's just that the decentralist bookshelf already contains many volumes far better than this—works by Jane Jacobs, Ivan Illich, Karl Hess, Colin Ward, Leopold Kohr, and more. It may be tempting to break into hozzanahs each time a book appears that supports our side, but I'd rather save my cheers for projects that actually advance the cause.

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The God That Lives

by Herbert London

American Academia and the Survival of Marxist Ideas
by Dario Fernandez-Morera
Praeger: Westport, CT;
204 pp., $59.95

The fall of the Wall; the assertion by former communist leaders that they were engaged in systematic espionage against the United States; revelations provided by the Venona tapes of communist activity in this country; the admission by Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and other leaders that communism did not work; General Volkogonov's concession that President Reagan was justified in describing the U.S.S.R. as the "Evil Empire"; the collapse of the Soviet economy brought about by decades of neglect and misunderstandings; the incontrovertible evidence of millions murdered during the Stalinist purges; Solzhenitsyn's dark but accurate depiction of the Gulag; the blunt admission that Potemkin villages were built to dupe Western leaders into believing the Soviet Union was a secular paradise—all of this evidence should have damaged the Marxist mystique that has enthralled the American professoriate, but it has not. Dario Fernandez-Morera of Northwestern University explores the reasons behind this monumental denial of the evidence and exposes the necrophiliac tendencies of the American academy.

Marxism is protean, changing constantly in form and appearance for lack of rules or logic to constrain it. Moreover, as Fernandez-Morera points out, truth itself can never be objective in a Marxist sense because it is fashioned by categories (class, race, sex, sexual orientation, geographic identification) and political power.

For the academic deconstructing a text or engaging in semiotics, there is no truth to discover, only social and cultural practice. His remarkable flexibility in

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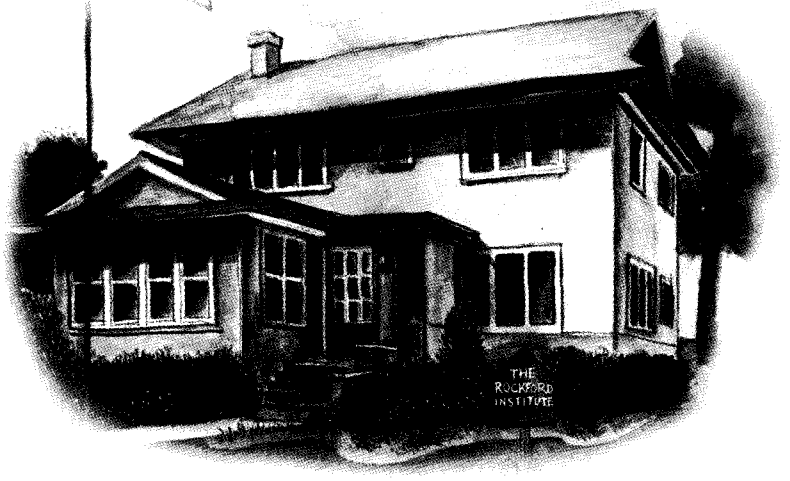

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this respect invites lies and the projection of raw power. If truth is relative, then lies are to be encouraged, and if the deconstructionist admits that a text has any authority, only he can reveal the hidden power relationship that gives the text its authority. Of course, one might ask who deconstructs the deconstructionist, but that is not a matter Marxists choose to discuss.

For the Marxist, the social construction of truth is situational, and truth itself is "infinitely malleable," differing in accordance with various histories and cultures. When my university colleagues tell me that truth is relative, I usually tell them to leave my ninth-floor office via the window, not the door. Let us see if they really believe the law of gravity can be defied. Even if the scientific community should agree that the "paradigm" of gravity can be challenged, that does not in any way affect the law of gravity.

Since the Marxist and his ideological cousins contend that truth cannot and does not exist, it should follow for him that there are no lessons to be learned, no research to be pursued. As one American philosophy professor has observed, all research is inevitably political: "Yet we cannot take the idea of unpoliticized humanities any more seriously than our opposite numbers in the clergy can take seriously the idea of a depoliticized church." Alas, his words reflect the academic trend to politicize everything, including literature and art. A highly regarded Australian political scientist, for instance, has declared the pursuit of truth to be less important than "winning."

In the midst of academic institutions devoted to intellectual freedom, a rigid orthodoxy has expressed itself in the form of strict ideological controls. So complete is its commitment to the axiom "truth is arbitrary" that any view which challenges the infinite malleability of culture is deemed to be hopelessly retrograde. If a professor maintains that gender is not merely a social construct but a function of biology and history, his view is dismissed as misogynistic.

Even that most feared enemy of Marxism, the scientific method, has been "demythologized," with versions of social conditioning now in the ascendancy. Much of what passes for environmental science, for example, is a form of Lysenkoism in which the political conditioning of nature is emphasized to the virtual exclusion of universal scientific verities. History has been relativized by an approach that emphasizes political applications determined by time and place over evidence and heuristic technique. "Great Books" are merely the sneering assertion of bourgeois authority. Many humanities instructors see it as their goal to unmask hegemonic intentions, not to teach the universal moral or aesthetic principles that undergird the status of these books.

Professor Fernandez-Morera has done a splendid job of exploring the theoretical Marxist positions that have penetrated conventional approaches to scholarship. Yet his approach, while useful, ignores other powerful ideas that often account for the intellectual degradation described in his treatise. To cite one example, radical egalitarianism, with its obvious Marxist provenance, has a prominent place in higher education. It is true, however, that Freudians for years have denounced stratification based on performance. "Emotional scarring" for those left behind their cohorts is not a concept originally embraced by Marxists.

Dialecticism, rendering the canons of scholarship nugatory, has altered the academy. But it can also be argued that scholarship has been adversely affected by the imposition of puerility, an infantilization of learning that at its core is jejune, yet does not cater to any ideological persuasion. Perhaps television viewing, what Neil Postman calls "amusing ourselves to death," is the real culprit in the university's decline; or perhaps it is infantilization that accounts for the susceptibility of faculty members to Marxist and quasi-Marxist ideas in the first place.

The delegitimization of a moral code which can identify guilt and innocence, evil and goodness, envy and generosity in unambiguous ways contributes as well to the relativism Marxist professors promote. Orwellian logic and its non-Marxist equivalents are not merely a function of Marxist relativism; they are related to the breakdown of religious ideals that sustain a moral code. As a colleague of mine once noted, "Never underestimate the importance of ignorance and pleasure-seeking in explaining human behavior." One doesn't need Marxist ideology to invite pleasure and attempt to avoid the consequences.

While Fernandez-Morera's monochromatic interpretation of higher education has its limitations, his book raises issues requiring extraordinary courage to address. If Marxist apologists cannot admit to the murderous forms their ideas have taken, then they are accomplices, witting or unwitting, to communist despotism. Those who do acknowledge their culpability must still be asked how, in the face of mounting evidence, they were able to deny reason.

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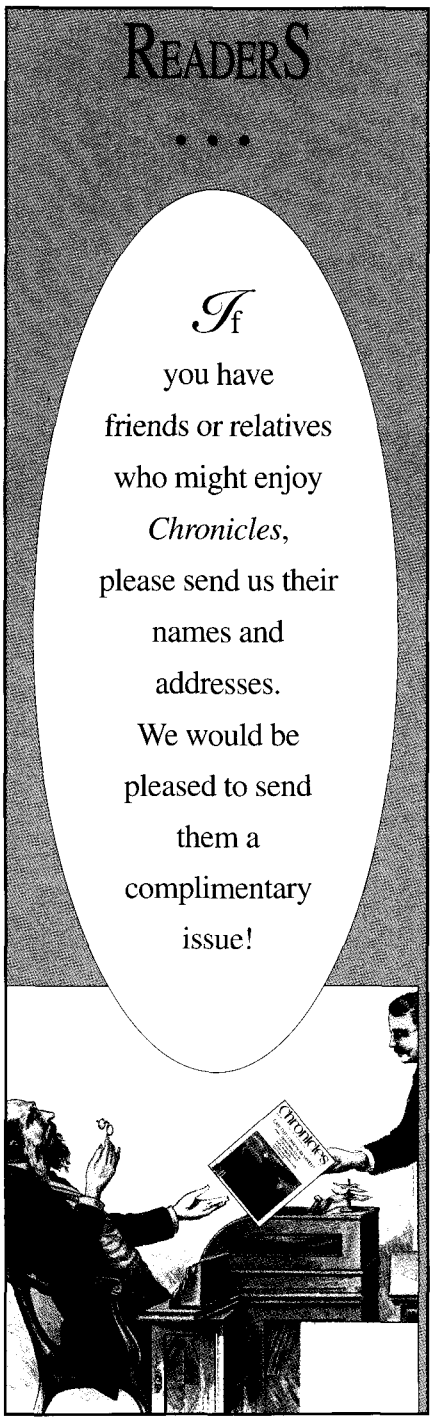
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Who's Cuckoo?

by James Hill

The Last Cuckoo: The Very Best Letters to *The Times* since 1900
edited by Kenneth Gregory
Pleasantville, NY: The Akadine Press;
343 pages, $15.95

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Not too long ago, the London *Daily Telegraph* resurrected a 1962 essay by Ian Fleming on "How to Write a Thriller," in which the creator of James Bond said, "If you look back on the best-sellers you have read, you will find that they all have one quality: you simply have to turn the page." Anthologist Kenneth Gregory's collection of what he deems the best of the letters to the *Times* of London in this century, the fourth and final in a series of *Cuckoo* books, certainly fits the Fleming prescription. In turning page after page, the reader discovers that *The Last Cuckoo* is a marvelous chronicle of life's ups and downs, its mysteries great and small, as described by the people who talk back to their newspapers through letters to the editor. Even the non-Anglophile can appreciate the humor in the May 2, 1940, letter from a Mr. J.R.B. Branson, in which he discusses the joy of eating grass clippings, or in Mr. Gregory's retort: "A typical meal *chez* Branson: lawn mowings mixed with lettuce leaves, sultanas, currants, rolled oats, sugar, and chopped rose-petals sprinkled over the whole. On 13 May Winston Churchill augmented Mr. Branson's diet with the promise of 'blood, toil, tears and sweat.'"

Newspaper editors have long suspected that what they give the reading public often fails to reflect the public's tastes and interests, and thus they rely on correspondents to tell them what they miss. Well, at least until the creation of focus groups—where people off the street, for a free cup of coffee, evaluate what some polling expert thinks should be presented as news. Alas, the "Letters to the Editors" page has fallen victim to more trendy vehicles. (You ask why circulation nationwide is falling or remaining flat?) One suspects that even the mighty *Times*, now under the ownership of Rupert Murdoch, mirrors this trend, to judge from the letters showing up on its Internet edition. Yet for most of this century the *Times* was a powerful voice for journalistic democracy through its letters column, and it is this aspect of grassroots democracy (or grass-clippings democracy) that Mr. Gregory has captured so well in this anthology.

British eccentricity plays a big part in Mr. Gregory's selections, especially the cuckoo-sighting letters from which the book takes its name. (In 1900, a correspondent claimed to have heard what he insisted was the first cuckoo of the year, not the last, thus settling the raging debate of when the 20th century began, 1900 or 1901. Look for the debate, cuckoo or not, in about two years.) Yet if readers of the *Times* were often eccentric, they were also practical, informative, and concerned with the search for truth. Even if they were not, many got a forum nonetheless, as did the Duce, who, in a letter dated June 26, 1925, defended his fascist experiment in Italy. (As Mr. Gregory notes, "There is no record of Hitler or Stalin writing to *The Times*.") Speaking of Stalin and Hitler, Sir John Squire on January 11, 1936, commented not on the gathering storm across the channel but on his visit with a gentleman whose fox terrier named Wessex had a passion for listening to the wireless. A single line reveals the inspiration for the letter: "Melodiously forth came—well, I won't say a Bach Fugue, for I do not remember asking Mr. Hardy whether his dog's Bach was worse than his bite."

Many of the letters chronicle Britain's perceived decline, still thought to be terminal when *The Last Cuckoo* was first published in England in 1987. As a John Cope asked on April 28, 1982, "In one single week's news items I have heard the following names preceded by the title 'Mister,' and in one case 'Sir': Andy, Ben, Bert, Bill, Bob, Dick, Ed, Fred, Freddie, Geoff, Jack, Jim, Ken, Max, Mike, Pat, Ray, Rob, Ron, Sam, Sid, Stan, Steve, Terry, Tiny, Tom, Tony, Vic, Viv and Will. Are we to understand that at their baptisms not one of these people was given a real Christian name?" Mr. Gregory deadpans in response: "On 12 October 1963 *The Times* published a letter from 'Anthony Wedgwood Benn'; a decade later, the same MP was 'Tony Benn.'"

Many of the correspondents selected for *The Last Cuckoo* are names familiar throughout the world: Winston Churchill, Arthur Conan Doyle, Rebecca West, Agatha Christie, Evelyn Waugh, and George Bernard Shaw. Few of the greats met the test, as explained by correspondent Sylvia Margolis on January 28, 1970, for epistolary publication—"I can bear witness that the prime qualification you need to get letters published in *The Times* is eccentricity"—in quite the way Neville Chamberlain did in his letter of January 24, 1933, in which he reported the sighting of a grey wagtail in St. James's Park. As Mr. Gregory noted: "On 30 January Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany." (He could have added that Neville Chamberlain was to go down in history more for what he did not see than for what he did.)

Like any good page-turner, *The Last Cuckoo* does not need much interpretation from its editor: the characters do the heavy lifting here. In the end readers may well find themselves asking, Why aren't letters to American newspapers in the same league with these? Good question, but not one of any interest to focus groups right now.

James Hill is the last editor of the editorial pages of the late Phoenix Gazette.

The Next to the Last Cuckoo

"You say in your leading article today, 'No one has ever suggested that novels should have indexes.'

"I possess a translation of Tolstoy's ***Resurrection***, published by Messrs. Grosset and Dunlap in New York and 'illustrated from the photoplay produced by Inspiration Pictures Inc,' which has a particularly felicitous index. The first entry is: 'Adultery, 13, 53, 68, 70'; the last is 'Why do people punish? 358.' Between them occurs such items as: Cannibalism, Dogs, Good breeding, Justification of one's position, Seduction, Smoking, Spies, and Vegetarianism."

—from a letter to the editor of the Times *by Evelyn Waugh, October 13, 1961*

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by Samuel Francis

The Truth About Republicans and Hispanics

Saying "I told you so" is never very polite, but sometimes, especially when trying to explain things to the Republican Party, it's advisable to say it. For the last year or so, the Republicans and their pet eggheads have been telling each other that they had just better shut up about immigration, immigration reform, and immigration restriction because any further talk about these subjects will only alienate the Hispanic vote, and the party can't afford to do that. Those who have crafted this argument seem to have a good many compelling reasons to offer in support of it, but when their reasons are examined closely, most of them fall apart. The truth is that those pushing the case against Republican support for immigration reform have never been in favor of controlling immigration anyway, and many of the reasons they offer in the guise of hard-headed political realism are the results of their own delusions about the nature of mass immigration into the United States. Insofar as the Republicans today face a serious political crisis because of their loss of the Hispanic vote, it's because they have studiously ignored the immigration issue for the last 20 years or so or have actually been on the wrong side of it. Supporters of immigration restriction such as myself and Peter Brimelow have been warning the party for years of the very crisis its leaders are now moaning about; the crisis exists because they didn't listen to those who urged them to face the problem before it became a crisis. Now, if I tell them, "I told you so," it's because they still have one last chance for action that will avert the crisis and resolve the immigration problem the country faces.

The new case against immigration reform kicked off in 1996, soon after the Republicans lost the presidential election. The first to concoct the new argument seems to have been *Wall Street Journal* columnist Paul Gigot, who was soon followed by neoconservative Linda Chavez. Both Gigot and Chavez are long-time boosters of immigration, the former in part because of his adherence to a libertarian ideology that regards national borders as the political equivalent of propeller aircraft, and the latter in part because of her self-professed identity as an Hispanic. Given their ideological and ethnic biases, their argument against immigration control ought to be received with some skepticism, but they are not the only ones to make it, and the argument itself contains demonstrable flaws.

The essence of their argument is that Hispanic voters in the last election swung heavily to Bill Clinton and against the Republicans, a trend that supposedly indicates the emergence of a monolithic Hispanic political bloc in the Democratic pocket that threatens the Republican future.

In California, the Hispanic population now numbers about 30 percent of the state, and in Orange County, long a Republican stronghold, it represents about 25 percent. The Republicans cannot hope to win presidential elections without California—it has gone Republican in every election Republicans have won since 1948—and they cannot hope to win California without Orange County. By the year 2025, the Hispanic part of the state's population will be 43 percent of the total, and 30 percent of the voting-age population will be Hispanic by the year 2000.

California, however, is not the only alarm bell to ring in Republican ears. Florida and Texas also contain many Hispanics, and Clinton carried the former state despite the traditional allegiance of Cuban émigrés to the more anticommunist Republicans. In Arizona, which had voted Republican in every presidential election year since 1948, Hispanics helped Clinton win in 1996 by three percentage points. In Texas, with a Hispanic voting-age population of about 12 percent, Hispanic voting increased by about 60 percent in 1996; in California, where Hispanics are now 15 percent of the voting-age population, the Hispanic part of the vote in 1996 increased by 40 percent. These are worst-case scenarios in large states that are electoral mammoths where Hispanics are concentrated, but even in smaller states where Hispanics are fewer, the same trend toward greater Hispanic voting participation and more Hispanic support for the Democrats appeared.

The Hispanic swing to the Democrats was due, according to the *New York Times*, to several factors, among them "a sharp increase in the number of Hispanic immigrants becoming citizens and a push by the Democrats to get them registered and get them to the polls" (a push that may have involved the deliberate and illegal naturalization of immigrants by the Clinton White House to enhance its Hispanic support), but it also supposedly was due to Hispanic fear of Republican support for immigration restrictions.

One may take this report for what it is worth. The *Times* story failed to quote any specific nonpartisan "expert" to support its claim that GOP involvement with immigration reform caused the alienation of Hispanic voters, and Proposition 187, which passed overwhelmingly in 1994, was not especially "severe": it merely cut public benefits to illegal immigrants and did not affect legal immigrants or immigration at all.

Republican foes of immigration control like Gigot and Chavez were quick to seize on these trends as evidence that the GOP had just better forget about immigration altogether. They also cited the declining Hispanic support for California Governor Pete Wilson, who won election in 1990 with 44 percent of the Hispanic vote but took only about 25 percent when he ran on an anti-immigration and pro-Proposition 187 platform in 1994 (and pulled himself from his political grave). One state poll recently showed that the current GOP favorite for succeeding Wilson as governor, state Attorney General Dan Lungren, enjoys the support of only 14 percent of the state's Hispanics.

Whatever the reality of the Hispanic anti-Republican backlash, Republican perception of it as real has served to strangle any inclinations the national party might have felt to restrict immigration. In 1997, rabidly pro-immigration Senator Spencer Abraham (R-MI) succeeded the mildly pro-restrictionist Senator Alan Simpson as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee's Immigration Sub-

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committee, and neither Abraham nor Newt Gingrich nor any other Republican leader in Congress has shown any interest in further constraints on immigration. The Republican and Beltway conservative mantra quickly became that the party should oppose illegal immigration but support the legal variety—a nonsensical position: if the only problem with illegal immigration is its illegality, then why not simply repeal all laws against it so that it would all be legal? Indeed, throughout 1997, congressional Republicans began unraveling the very legislation they had helped craft the year before, restoring welfare benefits to legal immigrants and amnesty provisions for relatives of illegals.

It ought to tell us something about the Republican Party that in all the hysteria generated over the loss of the Hispanic vote, not once did any senior party leader suggest that there were issues at stake in the immigration controversy that the party simply could not abandon without losing its character as a conservative vehicle. Indeed, Linda Chavez faulted Republicans not only for seeking to reduce legal immigration but also for restricting welfare benefits to legal immigrants and being too quick to "fan the nativist flames, blaming immigrants for taking American jobs and increasing crime." Her objections beg the questions of whether immigrants should receive welfare and whether uncontrolled immigration does take jobs and increase crime (there are substantial studies that show that it does). The naked cynicism of the Republicans in considering only their own immediate political interest and ignoring larger issues of principle and national interest does nothing to reassure either Hispanic or non-Hispanic voters that they can rely on the GOP to remain committed to any firm position.

Nevertheless, the argument that Republican support for immigration control has alienated Hispanics doesn't really wash. There are several hard-headed reasons, aside from principle, why the party should ignore the argument and get on with curtailing immigration entirely.

In the first place, Hispanic voters have traditionally been more Democratic than Republican, with the exception of Cuban émigrés in Florida. From 1972 through 1988, Republican presidential candidates won an average of less than 32 percent of the Hispanic vote, while their Democratic rivals won an average of nearly 66 percent—more than twice the Republican share. It's true that, in 1996, Clinton won a whopping 72 percent of the Hispanic vote to Bob Dole's 21 percent, but Clinton's share was still less than the 76 percent of the Hispanic vote that Jimmy Carter won in 1976. In short, there is no massive swing of Hispanics from Republicans to Democrats; Hispanics have largely always been Democratic, as their congressional representation shows.

In the second place, it remains to be proved that increased Democratic voting by Hispanics in the last election was due to Hispanic support for immigration and fear of Republican opposition to it. There simply was no concerted Republican opposition to immigration. The first action Bob Dole took after securing the GOP nomination in 1996 was to announce his rejection of the party's restrictionist platform, and his running mate, Jack Kemp, has long supported immigration, legal *and* illegal. Neither Dole nor Kemp had any record of supporting immigration restriction, and the party as a whole has not been in the forefront of the movement for restriction. Bob Dornan lost his re-election bid in 1996 in part because of the large Hispanic vote in his district (and perhaps because of voter fraud by illegal immigrants) but not because he opposed immigration. Dornan has always taken the line of legal immigration, good; illegal immigration, bad. As for strong restrictionists among Republican congressmen, neither California's Elton Gallegly nor Texas's Lamar Smith seemed to have any problem winning reelection, while Texas Governor George W. Bush's strong support for immigration doesn't stop two-thirds of the state's Hispanics from registering Democratic.

It's probable that Hispanics voted for the Democrats in 1996 because they perceived Republicans as welfare-trimming budget-cutters whose policies would jeopardize government benefits that the growing Hispanic underclass demands. If that was the Hispanic perception of the Republicans, it was a rather more accurate one than the delusion that the party is unequivocally dedicated to cutting back immigration.

Thirdly, it is by no means a valid assumption that all Hispanics are in favor of more immigration. Proposition 187 won the support of some 23 percent of Hispanics, and in 1992 the Latino National Political Survey found that more Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans (75 and 79 percent) favored reducing immigration than did non-Hispanic whites (74 percent). There is no reason why Republicans who oppose immigration cannot effectively appeal to many (perhaps a majority of) Hispanics and win their support. Nor is there any reason to think that even among pro-immigration Hispanics, a candidate's position on immigration is what determines how the Hispanic voter will cast his ballot. Conservative values involving family issues, crime, and the economy ought to appeal to middle-class Hispanics at least as much as immigration reform alienates them.

Finally, Republicans, even if they lose significant parts of the Hispanic vote permanently, can expect to gain votes by opposing immigration. A Roper poll in 1996 showed that some 83 percent of Americans want immigration reduced. It's true that immigration has never been a major national campaign issue, but that's because no Republican nominee has ever sought to make it one. There is absolutely no reason to believe that a Republican presidential nominee running on a platform that calls for severe restriction or outright curtailment of immigration would lose votes, and as the impact of immigration increases throughout the country, there is every reason to believe such an appeal would win major popular support.

The new Republican argument against immigration restriction is therefore of dubious validity, but it nevertheless contains a truth worth pondering. Because Republicans for a generation have contrived to ignore immigration and delude themselves about its cultural and political effects, the Hispanic part of the electorate is increasing rapidly, and the intense left-wing mobilization of Hispanic voters does promise that what the Republicans fear has already happened will indeed happen. That is what I and Peter Brimelow and other supporters of immigration restriction have been trying to tell Republicans for some years, and it's why the party needs to start paying attention to us instead of to pro-immigration ideologues like Gigot and Chavez. We told you so; you didn't listen; now you'd better before your own predictions of political disaster start coming true because you lacked the guts and good sense to deal with immigration when it was still possible to do so.

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Letter From Washington

by Brett M. Decker

Police or Fascists?

Eleanor Holmes Norton has proposed to reopen Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the White House for limited automobile traffic. She convincingly testifies that a barricaded executive palace does not properly reflect our standing as a shining "city upon a hill." After two long years of paralyzing traffic jams due to the paranoid closing of the Avenue of the Presidents after the Oklahoma City bombing, this *coup de main* by the District of Columbia's delegate to Congress raises profound doubt about the proportional nature of security in the land of the free.

The D.C. municipal government has launched a new "zero tolerance" initiative to crack down on minor infractions of the law. Strict penalization for minor offenses, the argument goes, will discourage more serious crime by inculcating heightened respect for all laws. As a result of this new policy, police have dramatically increased arrests for such inconsequential transgressions as moving violations.

The imperious enforcement of a zero tolerance agenda creates confusion concerning the appropriate use of police. Since the dual role of the police is to enforce laws and keep the peace, there is a perpetual danger that authorities will cross the fine line of the former in pursuit of the latter. For example, while playing catch on the Capitol lawn during a quiet, sunny weekend, two friends and I were accosted by a Capitol policeman and ordered to leave the park. Under the mistaken notion that Washington is not ruled by martial law, we respectfully asked the officer what statute we were violating by tossing a baseball around in a public park (more than 250 yards from the foot of the Capitol steps). The officer angrily retorted that his sergeant considered us to be a security risk and ordered our immediate removal.

In a similarly inexplicable incident, I was randomly pulled over while driving home from work one Friday evening on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The traffic cop insisted on a breathalyzer exam even though I was neither speeding nor swerving and had not had a drop to drink. When I asked if he could legally make random searches of this kind, the officer arrogantly replied, "Well, I am." In like manner, motorists across the country are increasingly subjected to roadblocks and chance searches.

The ridiculous nature of these stories should be obvious. In a city with hundreds of homicides per year and a nation plagued by violence, the police have countless obligations that are more pressing than bullying law-abiding citizens. For example, church pastors in the increasingly trendy Chinatown neighborhood asked the Metropolitan Police if a patrol car could drive through the area on Sundays because churchgoers were being harassed and threatened on their way to religious services. The request was rejected by the 3,500-officer police department with the excuse that the city did not have a spare car or cop—perhaps the churches should hire private security guards, the police suggested. As a result of this policy of neglect, the neighborhoods of Washington, D.C., are increasingly risky at all times of the day. Last year, 78-year-old Alice Chow was gunned down at 2:00 P.M. on a Sunday while walking home from her church in Chinatown. Now Mrs. Chow is just a statistic, part of the annual 400 homicides in D.C. and over 20,000 nationally.

But these tragedies obscure the growing problem of police harassment. As crime escalates unabated, politicians play the demagogue, passing new laws that give law enforcement agencies more unrestrained powers. Both Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and Senate Judiciary Chairman Orrin Hatch have suggested federalizing local criminal statutes and police forces. Meanwhile, overzealous authorities trample on the rights of ordinary Americans who have no viable vehicle of protest.

Whether playing catch in the park or drifting a few miles-per-hour over the speed limit to and from work, good law-abiding citizens are incessantly tormented by those whose duty it is to serve and protect them. While neighborhood streets are left vulnerable to crime, armed barriers are constructed to serve as a moat, keeping the people as far away as possible from their elected President. Like this blockade, many instances of overbearing state control seem insignificant—but they quickly add up when unchecked by a submissive population.

In a speech in 1771, Edmund Burke warned that "the greater the power, the more dangerous the abuse." In contemporary America, the tyranny of both criminals and the police rises while the unprotected majority live in fear. The bloated police bureaucracies do not need more staff, larger budgets, or new laws; they just need to crack down on criminals and leave the rest of us alone.

Brett M. Decker is the national political reporter for Evans and Novak Inside Report *and the producer for the television show,* Insights With Robert Novak.

Letter From Chicago

by Dave Gorak

Royko, the Cubs, et al.

He went to Wrigley Field on a hot day last June, along with several hundred others, to hear family and dignitaries eulogize columnist Mike Royko, who had spent more than 30 years banging out five columns each week while working for three different major Chicago newspapers. Otherwise empty because the team was on the road, the park was chosen for this tribute because Mike, like many people, was a long-suffering Cubs fan.

The formalities concluded, Mike's

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friends and coworkers were invited onto the field, where a caterer had set up two bars and several buffet tables containing hot dogs, grilled chicken, and numerous side dishes. Filling his plate and grabbing a can of pop, he walked to the batter's box, which now was shaded from the late afternoon sun. It was here in 1932 that Babe Ruth had allegedly pointed to the right center field seats just before hitting a towering home run to that very spot. Six years later, Cubs catcher "Gabby" Hartnett, who was behind the plate for Ruth's supposed "called shot," would stand there in the ninth inning and hit "The Homer in the Bloamin'" that beat the Pirates six to five.

He turned to look at the right field corner where, many summers ago, his father had brought him to see his first big-league ballgame. He looked at the top of the wall just left of the foul pole where the old man had leaned over and talked it up with a player who was shagging flyballs during batting practice. They talked, he remembered, as though they had known each other for years. That was the last time the two went to a ballgame together because, a few years later, the young boy fell in with the wrong crowd and became a White Sox fan.

"Hey, how about taking our picture?" asked one of his friends, who had joined a few others on the pitcher's mound. "Sure," he said, and he set his food and drink on the ground behind the mound in the spot normally reserved for resin bags. "Great! Now you get up there, and I'll take one of you," said the friend.

He looked in at home plate and thought that 60 feet, 6 inches didn't seem that far to throw a ball. He could do it easily, he thought, but not at 90-plus miles an hour.

The picture taken, he walked off the mound through the infield where men like Roger Hornsby, Phil Caveretta, and Ron Santo had played the game. He headed for the 400-foot marker in straight-away center field, and, as his feet touched the outfield grass for the first time, he felt the skin on his neck and arms begin to tingle. The old, green scoreboard loomed larger as he strolled toward the ivy-covered walls, and he swore that he heard the opening strains from the title theme of the movie *The Natural*. How corny, he thought, but was what he felt at that moment much different than that experienced by any rookie the first time he walks onto a major league field?

Two men stood, talking, at the 400-foot sign. He walked over and touched the ivy, and said facetiously, "Hey, do you think that 'Shoeless Joe' might show up?" He took in the full beauty of the park, listening to the popping sounds made by the numerous pennants, including the one bearing Billy Williams' number, that fly above the grandstand. And he wondered how some are able to throw a ball from this spot and hit the cut-off man, very often on the fly.

The three walked back, and, after bidding the other two goodbye, he headed for the home team's dugout and sat on their bench for a few minutes. "Wow! What a great smell, huh?" asked someone, referring to the dank odor coming from the tunnel leading to the clubhouse. "You can tell this is really an old ball park."

He looked at the left field wall, over which Ernie Banks sent his 500th career homer, and again he heard the voice of announcer Jack Brickhouse: "Back, back, back! Hey! Hey! He did it! He did it! Way to go, Ernie!"

Sadness came over him as he again looked into the right field corner. The old man was 30 the last time his team played in the World Series, and the odds of him seeing another get poorer each day. Why hadn't the gods been more generous to someone with such devotion and loyalty? His melancholy lingered as he left the field, not because of this team's sorry performance over the years, but because he wondered why some sons and fathers never develop that special relationship enjoyed by others. Why do some boys grow up having to seek other heroes?

As he stood at Clark and Addison waiting for his bus, a short man in his 80's hurried up to him and said, "Hey, if you see a cab coming, give me the high sign, and I'll get my wife. She's standing over there, just inside Gate F. It's too hot out here for her. I'd really appreciate it." He said he would, and he watched the old man walk back to his waiting wife.

A car pulled up at the stoplight that had just turned red. The driver, an attractive woman in her 30's, lowered the passenger-side window and, looking in the direction of the old man, asked, "Excuse me, isn't that Studs Terkel?"

"Yes, ma'am," he answered. "It surely is."

He grinned a lot on the way home, thinking about how he had spent the afternoon. This day would never have come had he insisted, fresh out of high school, that he pursue his dream of becoming a drummer like Gene Krupa or Buddy Rich.

"Listen," his mother had said, "you can't make a living playing drums!" She told the wayward youth that the brother of his third-grade teacher was a printer at the *Chicago Daily News*. "He said he can get you a job there," she continued, and she strongly encouraged him to do the right thing.

His big-band dreams in tatters, he relented, and in the spring of 1959, he joined the *News* as a copyboy. A short time later, while working the night shift, he spotted an unfamiliar face in the newsroom. The man looked pretty much like all reporters did in those days: the sleeves of his white shirt were rolled up to the elbows, his tie was loosened, a cigarette dangled from his mouth. He didn't smile much, and his voice very often sounded like a low growl.

"That's the new guy," said a coworker. "His name is Royko."

Dave Gorak worked at the Chicago Daily News *for 13 years.*

LIBERAL ARTS

YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK

After 39 days and $750,000, the Illinois State Police forced Shirley Ann Allen of Roby, Illinois, out of her house and into a psychiatric ward. The case, dubbed "Roby Ridge," attracted national attention after Mrs. Allen refused to submit to a court-ordered psychiatric examination and ran the busybodies off with a shotgun. Now, after more than a month of examination, a psychiatrist has determined that she is not a threat to herself or others, and a judge has ended her court-appointed guardianship. While the Illinois State Police have refused to repair the damage that they caused to Mrs. Allen's house, one might expect them to offer an apology for the standoff. Instead, Illinois State Police Director Terrance Gainer told the Associated Press, "I think everything has played out fairly." Of course he does: the State Police purchased $104,000 in new equipment just for the standoff.

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BUSINESS

Wall Street Imperialism

by Bob Djurdjevic

Parallels between the British Empire and the New World Order are striking. The principal difference is that the British crown relied on brute force to achieve its objectives, while the NWO elite mostly use financial terrorism (except for occasional raw power demonstrations, such as in the Gulf War or in Bosnia). The Great Asian Banking Crisis has accentuated both the similarities and the differences between the two empires.

The British Empire was built by colonizing other countries, seizing their natural resources, and shipping them to England to feed the British industrialists' factories. In the wake of the "red coat" invasions, local cultures were often trampled and replaced by a "more progressive" British way of life.

The Wall Street-dominated NWO Empire is being built by colonizing other countries with foreign loans or investments. Once those countries are firmly in their debt, the NWO financial terrorists then leave them high and dry, begging to be rescued. In comes the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Its bailout recipes—privatization, trade liberalization, and other austerity reforms—amount to seizing the target countries' natural and other resources and turning them over to the NWO elites—just as surely as the British Empire did by cruder methods.

"We cannot help but question the IMF's attitude. The IMF is acting as if it is an economic conqueror," the governing Grand National Party of Korea declared on December 4. Korean newspaper headlines also lamented the country's humiliation over the $57 billion IMF rescue package. "South Korea has virtually lost its economic sovereignty for the next three years," said the *Joongang Ilbo*.

In the wake of the IMF invasions, local cultures are under assault the world over and threatened with replacement by a more progressive, Western (read: materialistic) way of life. Unfortunately, American culture is represented by McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Nike, and the Hollywood film studios. This culture is no more American than are the multinational companies that happen to have their headquarters in the United States. These "Princes of the 20th Century" honor only one flag—the Almighty Dollar. As a result, Main Street Americans are among the NWO's exploited victims, just like their brethren in East Asia or Russia.

There is no question that McDonald's, Coke, Nike, and Hollywood represent the visible symbols of American neocolonialism. They are the innocent-looking facades which mask the destructive work of Wall Street's financial terrorists, who operate deep in the bowels of national economies. "The financial turmoil in East Asia is a case in point," Malaysia's prime minister, Dr. Mahatir Mohamad, said on November 24 at the APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Community) conference in Vancouver, Canada. "Two decades of growth was wiped out in two weeks. . . . Vibrant economies have been reduced to begging for aid from the IMF." Dr. Mahatir added that the free markets were "a recipe for slavery."

True. But during the post-Cold War market globalization and expansion (1990-1996), the Asia/Pacific region attracted about $375 billion in foreign investments, according to UNCTAD, a United Nations agency. That's about 74 cents of every dollar the multinational companies had invested in the developing world ($505 billion), and almost a quarter of all foreign investments made in the world during the same period ($1.6 trillion—including the developed countries). The rate of growth of these investments has been among the highest in the world—29 percent annually during the 1990's, almost double that for the world as a whole (16 percent annually). Then the bubble burst last fall, and the recriminations followed.

"Power corrupts," Dr. Mahatir lamented. "As much as government can become corrupt when invested with absolute power, markets can also become corrupt when equally absolutely powerful. We are seeing the effect of that absolute power today—the impoverishment and misery of millions of people and their eventual slavery."

Also true. But this recognition comes too late for East Asia and for Dr. Mahatir, whose country is supposed to host the next APEC conference. Greed and the quest for power have enslaved them. Dr. Mahatir and his fellow East Asian leaders should have thought about this before taking the NWO bait (money). Now that they are a penny short and a day late, remorse won't save them from the IMF's brutal collection methods. Witness the quick buckling under of Indonesia, Thailand, South Korea, and even of Japan. The once powerful and petulant "Asian Tigers" are all turning into obedient pets, wagging their tails fast and furiously to please their NWO masters.

But "one man's loss is another man's gain." The enormous flight of capital from East Asia, about $1.3 trillion between mid-August and late-November, has landed mostly on American and European shores. This positive cash flow (from the Euro-American perspective) temporarily helped stabilize the Western stock markets after the October 27 crash.

Bill Clinton, that unabashed champion of the causes of the Wall Street elite, was all smiles at the Vancouver summit. He reveled in APEC's endorsement of the IMF. Clinton even confidently predicted that he would eventually overcome his recent failure to cajole, bribe, or muscle the majority of the House of Representatives into approving the "fast track" trade bill.

But the victory which Clinton delivered to his Wall Street and big business backers at the APEC summit was a loss for America's Main Street, especially small American entrepreneurs—by far the most vibrant and productive element of the American economy. They created 21 million American jobs in the 1980's, while the *Fortune* 500 companies *downsized* to the tune of three million people, according to a *Wall Street Journal* report. For their efforts, these Main Street "ea-

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ger beavers" are about to be hit again by our NWO-controlled government—to help fund Wall Street's Asian bailouts. Lest we forget, the IMF is a Western *government*-supported "bank," of which the American taxpayer is by far the largest guarantor. When Clinton, Gingrich, and other globalist politicians tell us that the IMF solution is the way to solve the current Asian banking crisis, they forget to mention that about 40 cents of every IMF bailout dollar comes out of the American taxpayer's pocket, just like they forgot in the Mexican bailout in early 1995.

Thanks to their control of the mainstream corporate media, the NWO elite and their friend in the White House are still able to claim credit for the recent strength of the American economy, while helping themselves to the pockets of the true Main Street entrepreneurs by using *public* funds to bail out *private* interests in *foreign* countries. Our *elected* officials do not make the calls about using taxpayers' money for private rescue missions. The NWO's *appointed* proxies in the Clinton cabinet do.

Case in point: On October 30, U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin (a former Wall Street tycoon) reportedly called the top Treasury and White House officials to tell them that he had agreed to contribute three billion dollars of U.S. taxpayers' money to the IMF bailout of Indonesian banks. Get this—the Treasury Secretary told the President what sort of a deal *he* had cut with his Wall Street banking pals! This sums up who is really running this country and for whose benefit.

And these Wall Street and Washington hyenas will help themselves to a few more tens of billions of the taxpayers' dollars before the Great Asian Bailout is over. The money needed to resuscitate other Asian countries could amount to more than $100 billion, double the Mexican rescue of 1995, according to a *Business Week* report last November. The potential price tag involves not only the $40 billion commitment to Indonesia but an additional $23 billion to Thailand and the Philippines. Financial analysts are also predicting that Korea, with its lack of foreign reserves and a banking crisis sparked by debt-choked companies, will need as much as $40 billion to clean up its mess.

Six of the top 30 corporations in Korea filed for bankruptcy last year alone. If all of the bad loans were written off, the entire equity of Seoul's commercial banks would disappear. Japanese banks are also on the hook to the "Asian tigers" for some $263 billion. European banks have contributed about $155 billion; American banks, a reported $55 billion.

But the biggest troubles may be brewing in Japan and China, the largest Asian markets. Japan is in line for "a truly world-class banking crisis," predicted Dr. Morris Goldstein in an interview with the *Australian Financial Times*. Goldstein, a former deputy head of research for the IMF who is now with the Institute for International Economics in Washington, D.C., said that the "systemic risk" is highest in Japan. Subsequent failures of Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, part of the 100-year old Yamaichi Securities, confirmed Goldstein's forecast. In late November, Moody's downgraded the credit ratings of Long Term Credit Bank of Japan, Nippon Credit Bank, Mitsui Trust, Yasuda Trust, and Chuo Trust.

A Jardine Fleming report suggested that the nonperforming loans held by all Japanese banks could account for almost 23 percent of Japan's Gross Domestic Product—a level surpassing even Thailand's failures (13 percent). America's savings and loan crisis was insignificant by comparison. The cost to the public sector of solving that crisis was "only" around 3 percent of the GDP. Fleming estimates that the ultimate cost to the Japanese government will be 11 percent of the GDP, or about $500 billion. Without doubt, that would be "a truly world-class crisis."

Then there is China, that darling of the globalist elite. During the 1990's, China attracted $158 billion of foreign investments, more than any other country in the world except for the United States, according to UNCTAD. Japan, by contrast, got about $8 billion during the same period. During the 1990's, foreign capital spending in China has grown at an annual rate of 52 percent—more than three times faster than the average world increase of 16 percent. And the pace of investment in China has been accelerating. In 1996 alone, China received over $42 billion in foreign investments. That's about one-third of all investments made in developing countries last year. And no wonder. The master bailer had set the bait for the victims of its future bailouts. In September 1996, the IMF predicted that Asia would lead the world in 1997 with an 8 percent GDP growth.

Now that a financial *tsunami* has hit Asia, analysts and economists are scrambling to lower their Asia forecasts, and investors' enthusiasm—even in China—is starting to ebb. Foreign investments contracted by about 35 percent in the first 10 months of 1997, in part because China's top banks have about $90 billion in problem loans. Despite nearly two decades of economic reform, the Chinese state still owns about 30 percent of the economy, employs two-thirds of the urban work force, and accounts for more than 50 percent of industrial assets, according to an October report by the *Sunday Telegraph* of London. There are more than 300,000 state enterprises in China, and at least half are in debt. To an economist, these behemoths cry out for sweeping reform, the *Telegraph* concluded. Read: privatization, downsizing, and layoffs, the IMF specialty.

The country is wallowing in excess manufacturing capacity, and real estate in Shanghai and Beijing has been overbuilt. A British tourist recently told me that a member of the Shanghai Real Estate Board enthusiastically proclaimed: "Shanghai property is hot." To which the Briton replied: "No, Shanghai property is empty." The newly built malls and commercial buildings which she had visited "were all eerily empty."

Why? Because foreign investors had talked themselves into spending hundreds of billions of dollars on the basis of the grossly inflated Asian economic growth projections, and because greedy local chieftains had talked themselves into believing that they can buy economic prosperity with borrowed money. Now that the bubble has burst in Asia, both bankers and politicians are talking containment, which is why Clinton agreed at the APEC summit in Vancouver to hold a global conference on the banking crisis.

While the financial elite debate how best to protect themselves by using public funds, much more than jobs and real estate are at stake for China and its neighbors. When factories falter, so do cheap or free education, medical care, housing, and the broader sense of community that is part of urban life. For example, in the industrial city of Tianjin, about an hour's drive from Beijing, some families have been plunged into poverty almost overnight after being laid off. All this has led the London *Telegraph* to conclude that "China edges to the brink of a social breakdown" as tens of millions of Chi-

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nese workers face unemployment or even starvation. We always hear about these communist victims, but the same fate awaits the tens of millions of workers in South Korea, Japan, Thailand, and Indonesia. They will bear the brunt of the Great Asian Banking Crisis, not the NWO bankers and politicians who caused it. Stories about the human impact of the transnationalists' financial terrorism have been woefully absent from the front pages of the world's newspapers.

The recent stories about Asia also do not discuss the role of the big Japanese investors who, with the ailing banks, owned $291 billion of U.S. Treasury bills as of last July (8.5 percent of all bills outstanding). In other words, in today's intricately interwoven "global economy," it is virtually impossible that the failure of the Japanese banking system would not affect other countries, including the United States. We have already seen how a stock market crisis which began in Hong Kong soon spread like wildfire around the globe. Even if the fire seems to be temporarily under control, we are evidently not out of the woods yet. Maybe this is why the U.S. Treasury Secretary, in a private letter disclosed by the *New York Times* on November 13, warned his Japanese counterpart that the Japanese "should not be tempted to export their way out of their troubles." And a drowning man should keep gulping water instead of swimming.

Rubin is concerned (and rightly so) because one effect of industrial globalization has been a huge American trade deficit, which stood at $192 billion in 1996. If current trends continue, America's trade deficit with the rest of the world could expand to $250 or $300 billion by early 1999, according to David Hale, a trade economist with Zurich Insurance Group.

As of August, the U.S. trade deficit with China ($5.2 billion) was even bigger than that with Japan ($4.5 billion), or that with Western Europe and Canada combined ($3.6 billion). As of December 1997, our deficit with China was running 30 percent ahead of the previous year's pace.

So Rubin's remark seems to have been driven by a parochial concern—losing market share to low-priced imports from Japan or other Asian countries. Yet those are precisely the benefits to consumers which the NWO globalists hailed during the recent debate on "fast track" trade legislation. "Free trade" advocates evidently have no trouble talking out of both sides of their mouths. Another important conclusion to draw from Rubin's remark is that the Japanese, if they are not allowed by the NWO Empire to export their way out of trouble, may have no choice but to dump their huge U.S. T-bill holdings and other U.S. securities to feed the Nippon banking beast. And if the Japanese pull out of the United States, that would hardly be good news for the stock market, would it?

If you are a Wall Street investor, stand by for a few more roller-coaster rides on the Dow, but if you are a Main Street entrepreneur or worker, brace yourself for the possibility of a global recession. "If it [the recession] spreads [from Korea] to Japan, then it goes all over the world," a Korean analyst told the Sydney *Morning Herald*.

What goes around, comes around—especially in globally integrated markets. The United States is no exception, just as the British Empire was not. The only question is if the social unrest caused by the gouging of the NWO elite may also spell the ultimate downfall of the New World Order.

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LIBERAL ARTS

HOW DID I DO, JOHNNY?

The *Sunday Telegraph* (London) reports that educational trends in Great Britain are similar to those here. Under new educational guidelines for the 1997-1998 academic year, "schoolchildren will be asked to say whether teachers treat them fairly." Those who might object that children are not the best arbiters of "fairness" will be happy to know that the Brits have that covered. According to the *Telegraph*, "Five- to seven-year-olds will be encouraged to acquire empathy, a social conscience and a love of nature."

MILITARY

The Service Academy Dudes

by Chris Timmers

Among the many things I remember is how nice the "digs" were: we were on the second floor of a well-appointed office building in the South Park area of Charlotte—a tony, upscale area with a beautiful, expansive shopping center, numerous boutiques, top-flight restaurants, coffeehouses before coffeehouses became chic. You get the idea: the high-rent district.

A local real estate mogul had donated his offices for this third Saturday in January to our local congressman. The congressman had, in turn, enlisted the support of 15 or so of us to interview prospective candidates for the service academies. One panel of seven of us was to interview young men and women who wanted to attend West Point and Colorado Springs; the other group dealt with the Naval, Merchant Marine, and Coast Guard academies.

A young congressional aide met us and handed out packets which contained summaries of each candidate's accomplishments (high school transcripts, letters of recommendation, various awards, the usual stuff) and a list of questions we might want to ask the candidates should we find ourselves at a loss for words. As a graduate of West Point, I wondered why I or any of the other panel members would need this list of questions. It became clear to me later when I learned that, of the seven men and women on the Army/Air Force panel, I was the *only* academy graduate; for the Navy/Merchant Marine/Coast Guard panel, there were two academy graduates, a gentleman from Annapolis ('67) and one from the Merchant Marine Academy ('68).

The chairman of my panel was a retired Air Force officer, a Citadel graduate, and a seven-year veteran of a North Vietnamese POW camp who had also taught at the Air Force Academy in its early years. The other panel members were a retired president of the University

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of North Carolina affiliate in Charlotte; a tax accountant, who was also a reserve Captain in the Army and a Civil War enthusiast; a district court judge; a housewife with no apparent links to the military, even through her husband or other relatives; and a large, bustling woman in her 40's whose aggressively gregarious manner reminded me of a used car salesman. It turned out that she *was* in sales, real estate sales. Several years before, she had visited the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs and was forever smitten. She claimed to be a lifelong Democrat, and I wondered how she got on this panel given the congressman's eternal membership in the Republican Party. Noting her last name, I asked her if she was any kin to the owner of a large Buick dealership in town. "Oh yes," she replied, "that's Daddy." Enough said. Daddy was probably a generous donor to the congressman's campaign. Ah, politics.

There was a slight knock on the door and the smiling face of one of the secretaries swung into view. "Are you ready for Mr. Compton?"

Young Compton was about five foot nine, very thin, with glasses. He smiled lamely as the chairman told him to take a seat. His SATs were fair, with the Math and Verbal total just over 1200, and his GPA was a 3.67. He was a senior (as were all the kids) at a local public high school where there had been a recent shooting, and his mother was a part-time nurse; his dad worked for the local power company. The chairman started things off. "Tell us about yourself, Ted."

"Well," he began, looking at his folded hands in his lap, "I was born and raised here. My dad was in the Army as an enlisted man and said it was OK but if I ever wanted to go into the service I should be an officer and the best way to be an officer is to go to a service academy." Sound enough advice, and I noticed that he had selected Air Force as his first academy choice, followed by Navy. No West Point.

"Why do you want to be in the Air Force?" said our realtor lady.

"I want to be in the Air Force and go to the Air Force Academy because it represents the best of all the services to me. The Air Force is where it's at, so to speak and I think—"

"Have you ever been out to the Academy?" she interrupted.

"No, but I visited my cousin once at West Point. He was a cadet there but quit after his first year."

"You should really try to get out there," she plowed ahead, "it's just so beautiful, and believe me I can understand why you want to go there."

The district judge, a man of no military experience, asked what would have been an intelligent question some years ago: "I see that your grades in English, History, and French are all very strong, but you seem to have had trouble in Algebra and Chemistry. Are you aware that all the academies place strong emphasis on math and science? You'll chiefly be studying engineering, and to do well at academics, indeed to graduate, you're going to have to pass these courses. Can you handle that?"

Ted frowned a bit and said that he thought he had the desire and could overcome difficult courses by "burning the midnight oil." The judge obviously did not know that since the admission of women to the academies in 1976, the curriculum has eroded to the point that engineering courses are now largely optional and cadets and midshipmen can graduate with degrees in subjects such as American History or English. Experience with the first few classes of women showed officials at all three academies that women tend not to do well in hard science and engineering, at least not as well as the men, and consequently experience a higher dropout rate. Hence the movement away from engineering and toward a more liberal arts curriculum.

More questions followed, and the atmosphere turned a little friendlier. Ted was praised for holding down a job after school and still lettering in cross country and track.

"Do you have a girlfriend?" the realtor lady asked, jangling what appeared to be about three dozen shiny brass bracelets on her right wrist as she scribbled away.

"Well, sort of," he smiled.

"Does she know that if you go out to Colorado Springs you won't be able to see her until Christmas leave? You know that, don't you? They only let you go home once during your first year. Isn't that going to be tough on her? On you? On both of you?"

"Yeah, I know that, but this girl . . . " I figured it was my time to say something, even though our chairman hadn't glanced at me to give the go ahead.

"You indicated the Naval Academy as your second choice," I said.

"Yeah," he replied cautiously (it then occurred to me that this kid hadn't once addressed any of the adults on this panel as "sir" or "ma'am").

"Are you aware that the nature of duty a Navy ensign is assigned can and most probably will be vastly different from that of an Air Force second lieutenant?" I continued.

"Sure," he said, "but that's OK, because what I really want to do is serve my country." (He is clueless about the nature of work junior officers do in any branch of the service.)

Now our chairman spoke again: "Ted, I want you to follow along with me on this little exercise. I'm on a plane; I'm going out of town on business, and after I get in my seat a young man sits down besides me. We both buckle up and at last the plane takes off. After a while we begin speaking to each other and we find out that we're both from Charlotte [large grin]."

Ted: "OK."

Chairman: "Well, then, it appears, after we've been chatting for a while, that we have a number of friends in common. And one of them is *you*! I ask him to tell me about his thoughts on our mutual friend, Ted."

Ted: "Uh huh."

Chairman: "Tell me Ted, if I ask him to tell me three good things about you, what would he say?"

Ted: "Gee, that I'm a good friend, that I, uh, work hard. That uh, I uh . . . "

Chairman: "Ah! You work hard. Well, what do you mean by that?"

I cringed to think that this sort of questioning might go on all day long. The most inflated, circumlocutious way of asking the kid to list three personal strengths and weaknesses!

Finally, young Ted left and we tallied our score sheets. The maximum score any candidate could get was 100. The points were broken down as follows: 20 points for SAT scores, 20 for high school GPA, and 60 points based on subjective categories such as leadership, poise, personal appearance, self-expression, *potential to serve a career in the military*. Regarding this last category, how were we to know a young man's seriousness with respect to a military career? And leadership: that, too, was enormously difficult to judge. Sure, some kids were team captains or class presidents, and one could cite such offices as evidence of leadership; but leadership at the high school level is merely a name given to popularity. Real leadership entails making difficult, unpopular decisions, telling people

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they have to do unpleasant—sometimes *very* unpleasant—tasks.

These 60 subjective points were the hardest to award, and sparked the most disagreements. A sample:

Chairman: "He . . . I don't know . . . didn't strike me as . . . his look was all wrong."

Housewife: "He was sweet."

Realtor lady: "I just don't know. I liked his tie, but he doesn't seem to understand that he isn't going to be seeing his girlfriend *at all*."

Accountant: "Hmmmm."

Former university president: "I just think he's an outstanding young man. And by God, he's got my vote!"

Me: "This kid doesn't have a clue as to what he'll be getting into."

We all tallied our results and handed them to the chairman. He added them all and divided to get an average. Ted's score: 81.

Next came Jack, a young man sporting a mustache and a goatee. I immediately surmised that he was a product of our illustrious public school system. A free spirit, he wore dark slacks and a crew neck sweater. (Ted wore a sport coat and tie.) Jack was different, way different. Our chairman asked him: "You say here that your first choice is Air Force, your second West Point. Are you aware, Jack, that at either of those academies facial hair is not permitted?"

Our candidate shrugged his shoulders. "That's cool." The accountant then asked why in one semester during his junior year his grade in Spanish went from an A to a D.

"Well, that's easy," said Jack. "You see, the teacher there was, well . . . you know, we didn't see eye to eye. I mean, she was a real bitch."

I have rarely heard a silence so total, so crushing. Our chairman smiled, as the realtor lady and the housewife gasped, and he said to Jack, "Yes, well, that's fine. Does anyone else have questions for Jack?" No one did.

Our next candidate was Steven, a tall, red-haired young man wearing a suit. Very conservative. Very well spoken. He was a student at Charlotte Country Day (annual tuition: around $10,000), and he lived with his folks in Myers Park, on a street known as Queens Road West. For the uninitiated, Myers Park is pretty much *the* area of Charlotte in which to live: both old and new money reside there. Rather than worry if this young man knew what he was getting into and what West Point (his first and only choice) was really like, I mentioned that Myers Park and Country Day were evidence of having been raised in rather comfortable circumstances. He nodded quietly. "Are you aware, Steven, that as an Army officer you will literally never make enough money to live in the neighborhood your parents live in now?"

He looked me resolutely in the eye and said, "Yes, sir. And I don't care."

His grandfather, we learned, was a classmate of William Westmoreland; attending West Point had been Steven's goal since early boyhood. He spoke of the desire to serve his country and be part of a tradition that extends back to before the War of 1812.

Realtor lady: "I look at your application, Steven, and I don't see that you've indicated any other academies as alternate choices."

"No ma'am."

Judge: "Well, what will you do if you don't get into West Point?"

"I've been accepted to North Carolina State University. I'll go there, enroll in ROTC, and reapply in another year."

Applecheeked housewife: "But Annapolis is also a nice school."

"Yes ma'am, but it's not for me."

Chairman: "You're certain that you don't want to indicate a 'back-up' academy?"

"Yessir."

He left smartly, and we looked over his packet as we filled out his score sheet. His SATs and GPA only netted him a 26; but for the subjective portion, I gave him a 55.

"But I just think he's too rigid about this West Point thing," said the realtor lady.

"So, what's wrong with that?" I asked. "He's decisive, he knows what he wants. Why hold that against him?" Steven had generated more discussion than either of our first two candidates, and I couldn't understand why. He was without a doubt our best prospect. In the end we gave him a collective 82. Just one point ahead of Ted, our nondescript first candidate.

I asked myself, why am I with these fools who know little or nothing of life at any of the academies? With an active alumni organization in town, West Point could have staffed every position on this board with a grad. I got on because the congressman's local representative was a friend and he offered me a place on the panel. I should have told him that I had a dozen or more fellow alums who would be tickled pink to be part of this process. But I didn't. My mistake.

Over lunch, I had the opportunity to speak with some of the members of the Navy/Merchant Marine/Coast Guard panel. "So what did you think of young Ted?" I asked.

"Sharp kid," said one of the Navy panel members. "We gave him, I think, a 92."

Many of the young men interviewed after lunch also saw no reason to wear a collared shirt and tie or to address their adult questioners formally. I was distressed that, of our six candidates that afternoon, two had come from broken homes. What a chore it must have been for these young men just to concentrate on their studies. Without either a father to coach you or a mother to encourage you, facing a panel such as ours must be a daunting task. But I was struck by what I perceived as a lack of seriousness toward the military. Four of the six candidates, when asked why they wanted to attend a service academy, almost instantly replied: "Because it's a great education and it doesn't cost anything." Well, maybe not to their parents, but it will cost the young graduate a number of years on active duty in the Armed Forces. While their high school classmates who went to state universities or prestigious private colleges were working regular hours and making competitive wages at IBM or DuPont, these young lads would be on destroyers in the North Atlantic or riding around atop tanks in Germany. Away from family, in foreign or even hostile environments, and making mediocre salaries, they would slowly learn that they were now paying the tuition that the United States taxpayer had kindly defrayed for their four years at West Point or Annapolis.

The two best candidates of the afternoon, by far, both scored in the low 90's. One was salutatorian of his class and had SATs in the 1400's; the other was ranked fourth, had SATs in the high 1300's, and was captain of the basketball team. Both had Air Force as their second choice and the Naval Academy as their first. For my money, Steven was still the best of the lot. Steadfast, unswervingly dedicated to achieving his goal of wearing Army gray. Of course, I'm prejudiced in favor of West Point, but the other kids were either less than fully committed or, like our two prime candidates, not interested in the Army. I wrote this off to the fact

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that Tom Cruise screaming off the deck of the *USS America* in his F-14 in *Top Gun* was still fresh in the memories of many of these young men. Who needs (or wants) the infantry, with all its mud slogging, sweating, mosquito-infested stoop labor? Not these guys. In addition to being disappointed, I was honestly surprised. I thought of my time on active duty as an infantry officer at Fort Bragg, merrily jumping out of airplanes, and later in West Germany during the good ol' days of the Cold War: from my brigade commanders to my battalion commanders, company commanders, and fellow lieutenants, Southerners dominated that branch of the Army. That was some 15 years ago, but had the perception of the Army (especially the infantry) changed that much in so relatively short a time? Maybe I got out while the getting was still good.

Four o'clock came faster than I had expected. We turned in our evaluation of our last candidate. Of the nine we had interviewed, the two thoroughbreds who really wanted Annapolis were at the top of our list. My favorite, Steven, was right in the middle at number five. Jack, he of the "b" remark, was dead last. The chairman took the packets and turned them over to the congressman's secretary. We shook hands all around and said we would look forward to getting together the next year for the same drill. The secretary thanked us on behalf of the congressman and we walked to our cars. The realtor lady was suddenly at my side.

"I know you were upset about the ranking Steve got, but sometimes even if these kids don't get what they want, everything turns out OK in the end." I just smiled as I got into my car and said, "Same time, next year," and she waved to me as she walked to her Mercedes. (Wait a minute. Her old man owns a Buick dealership!)

Regarding our candidates, the two Annapolis men went on their way to Maryland. One quit after two weeks, while the other graduated and went into the submarine service. Ted, our first candidate, ended up at the University of North Carolina; upon graduation, he enrolled in the law school. Steven did not get a congressional appointment, but a senatorial one from Jesse Helms. He struggled for his first two years at West Point but hung in there and graduated two years ago. He is now a tank platoon leader in the First Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas. I never heard anything further of the rest of the candidates. Not even Jack. Could he possibly have run afoul of another "bitch"?

Let's hope so.

Chris Timmers writes from Matthews, North Carolina.

FILM

Another Native Son

by Michael Washburn

The Keeper

Produced by Michelle Silverstein
Written and Directed by Joe Brewster
Released by Kino International

Joe Brewster's film *The Keeper* came out while New York was reeling from the case of Abner Louima, the Haitian immigrant beaten and tortured by white cops in Brooklyn. Coincidentally, his movie is about wayward corrections officers—but the officers are black, not white. Shot for a mere $150,000, without help from a major studio, *The Keeper* is the most brutally honest film to date about life inside prison—in this case, Kings County Jail, where Brewster, an independent black director, used to work as a psychiatrist. Portraying the attitudes and behavior of black cops and guards, *The Keeper* parallels the work of Richard Wright, who saw a *white* society and justice system incurably hostile to the faceless, violent underclass. The film points to an ever more visible divide between minorities who have assimilated to some degree and those who have not.

Filmed mostly at Kings County Jail, the movie opens with several officers interrogating Jean Baptiste, a Haitian immigrant arrested after a black woman (apparently strung out on drugs) accused him of raping her. Stubbornly protesting his innocence, Jean is hauled off to a cell to await trial, whereupon he tries to hang himself only to be saved at the last second by Paul Lamont, a black corrections officer and law student. After talking with the woman who accused Jean, Paul becomes convinced of the man's innocence and raises the money to bail him out of jail. Alienated from his family, Jean moves in with Paul and his wife Angela, who is at first scared but then enthralled by this quiet Haitian with his interest in voodoo and bizarre rituals. Superstitious, mysterious, and aloof, Jean is clearly out of place in the modern, concrete world, unlike Paul, who—in spite of having a Haitian immigrant father—has assimilated well and is working toward a law degree.

At Kings County Jail, Paul Lamont is the exception to the rule—guards and corrections officers are cynical, embittered, and brutal. The prison staff knows all too well how ineffective criminal justice is and how futile the idea of reform. The staff's attitudes are summed up by a black officer named Clarence Ross, who guards the prison's law library. During his shift, Clarence wonders aloud what drives black men to bash an old woman in the head for $2.50 and a subway token. To him, the blacks who pass in and out of the jail's doors are "hopeless." When a black Muslim inmate protests, "You don't even know me," Clarence retorts, "No, but I know a thousand motherf-----s like you. I'm from Brownsville. I know you'd rather hit my mama in the head for a nickel than work for a nickel." (Imagine a white officer being so candid.)

Though they are minorities themselves, the guards have given up regarding the prisoners as anything more than savage Bigger Thomases. It's not hard to understand the despair of guards who see the prison population swelling and frequent eruptions of violence from the inmates. (The game of criminal justice, Brewster seems to believe, is rigged. The prison's elderly exterminator admits to Paul late one night that he deliberately fails to do his job, letting rats go after he catches them to ensure that he will always have a source of income—an interesting metaphor for the criminal justice bureaucracy itself.)

But Paul wants to be fair-minded. He has enough faith in Jean's character to disbelieve the rape charge and to let Jean near his wife. Jean, it turns out, is quite a charmer, with knowledge of French songs and Creole recipes. His interests also include strange voodoo rituals, which he and his friends enact before Paul and Angela. As she grows alienated

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from her tense, irritable husband, who is ill-at-ease among guards he finds "scarier than the prisoners," Angela grows more and more interested in Jean, who is mysterious, vigorous, alive. Fed up, Paul finally kicks Jean out of the house, hoping this will nip Angela's interest in the bud. It doesn't, of course; Angela starts seeing Jean behind her husband's back.

Released from jail, the black Muslim quickly gets arrested again for "steering"—giving the location of a drug den to an undercover cop. Although this in itself is a trivial offense, the inmate now faces a three-year sentence because of his long rap sheet. He believes, with some reason, that the system has been unfair to him, since the arresting cop repeatedly nagged him for the location of the drug den. Infuriated, the prisoner goes berserk and "shanks" one of Paul's colleagues, a well-liked white officer, in the face. The guards—including a reluctant Paul—decide to mete out a punishment that will stick. In a scene reminiscent of Abner Louima's beating, Clarence Ross, Paul, and several other guards enter the prisoner's cell wearing white rubber gloves and pummel and torture him almost to death. When one of the guards pulls out a switchblade and proposes to kill him, Paul makes an exit, saying he will have no part of it. His astonished colleagues watch him leave, perhaps wondering whether they should let Paul get away. In the end, they decide not to kill the prisoner, but we see how the justice system breeds two different kinds of rage—the prisoner has been driven mad by a penal code he could not understand or endure; the guards go wild because of the system's failure to deal with rats the way it should.

Although he takes part in the beating, Paul likes to believe that he is above the savage hatred that almost drives his colleagues to kill the prisoner. But Paul himself, though he will not admit it, turns out to harbor the same elemental fear and hatred that grip his colleagues. Troubled by Angela's coolness toward him, Paul starts following her and studying her every move. After seeing his wife leave Jean's place one night, Paul storms in, revolver in hand, and confronts the Haitian, demanding to know if he slept with Angela. When Jean, with his usual diffidence, fails to respond right away, Paul shoots him in the chest. Despite his desire to be magnanimous, Paul, like the whites in *Native Son*, believes the worst about the black outsider without any evidence at all. If Jean spent time alone with Angela, he must have slept with her, just as Bigger Thomas must have raped Mary Dalton once he had a chance to be alone with her, momentarily free from the constraints imposed by white society. The difference now is that by acting on his prejudice, Paul ruins his own life as well as destroying Jean's.

Things have come a long way since the days of Richard Wright, when scared black fugitives were always the ones on the receiving end of prejudice and hatred. Today, the sharpest division of all may be that between Uncle Toms and black thugs, as Joe Brewster reminds us in the final moments of his film. Some time after the beating of the prisoner, the law library receives a phone call purportedly from "Captain Thompson," requesting to see Clarence Ross upstairs in the prison's gym. When he enters the gym and the door slams shut behind him, he confronts not the police captain but six or seven large-bodied inmates. Among them is a certain black Muslim, who greets him with the words, "I know a thousand motherf-----s just like you . . . "

Michael Washburn writes from New York City.

LITERATURE

A Future for Critical Theory?

by George Watson

A questionnaire about future needs recently sent to a department of literature provoked at least one interesting reply: "We do not need a new post in Critical Theory. Theory is Old Hat."

An old hat, they say, is better than a bare head, and there can be no quarrel with the view that critical theory is old. It has been so since Plato and Aristotle. If the hat bought in Paris a generation ago and more now looks a trifle battered, there is an obvious solution to that. Get a new one. But it might, before shopping, be useful to ask what we are looking for. I want to propose here a new kind of critical theory, and one not to be found in Paris or, so far, anywhere else. Being a proposal, and nothing more, it is not meant to commit anyone. There will still be those who prefer the old wear, and there will still be those who prefer to go bare-headed. What I propose, in any case, is not yet in stock; it is hardly even a design. Perhaps it is more like the sketch a fashion-designer pencils in on a loose sheet to help him to think; and it may easily turn out, as such things do, to be an old design, half forgotten. "Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?" as T.S. Eliot asked in *The Rock*, and "Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" Theory once asked or forced us to forget a lot, and it may not be easy to recover it. As a philosopher once said, some of the hardest work a philosopher has to do is to get back to where the question began.

To take a few steps back, then, in order to advance: the Parisian phase in critical theory, now ending, was above all a denial of knowledge, an elaborate exercise in skepticism. In France, in that era, the subtext was political skepticism: first of the French Communist Party, as the heroism of the Resistance years faded; then of Marxism; then of socialism in general. Critical theory in that style was post-Marxist, and it began in skepticism. Indeed, skepticism needed a theory more than theory needed skepticism.

Marxism itself, in its day, had been equivocal on the issue of knowledge. It had scorned bourgeois objectivity as an illusion; it had invoked ideology as a term of instant dismissal, a bent looking-glass that always distorted and never told the truth. But at that point an embarrassing contradiction arose. For Marxism offered its own theory of history as true, and certainly true; in that classic turn-of-century phrase "Scientific Socialism," the adjective was supposed to mean certain and proven. So all ideologies were false except the one that proclaimed that they were. It was inevitable that such convenient self-exemption should one day be questioned; and when it was, it completed the skeptical view and made it universal. At that point, a generation ago, all hope of certain knowledge, whether in morality or the arts, was thought to have collapsed.

The need now, in a post-socialist age, is to find a successor to that failed attempt to explain or justify knowledge, and in attempting it I shall knowingly

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mingle moral and aesthetic issues: partly because the shape of the argument is identical, and partly because those who are subjectivists in the one, in my experience, are always so in the other. The instances abound. One of the charges Mao's widow was convicted of, in the trial of the Gang of Four, was a charge at once moral and aesthetic—she had enjoyed *The Sound of Music*. Depending on one's opinion of this film, this may indeed be a serious charge. Whether it is an indictable offense is a question for those who understand the legal system of the Chinese People's Republic. But in mingling, as it does, moral and aesthetic issues, it illustrates how misconceived it often is to try to distinguish them.

This is where a more damaging confusion begins. As an objectivist, I am deeply impressed in critical debate by an inequality that reigns between morality and the arts, on the one hand, and science on the other. If you were to ask a physicist or a chemist in his laboratory whether his inquiry was objective, he would no doubt reply, in a bored sort of way, that it was—unless, that is, he had read a book like Thomas Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). He would not, in answering, expect you to conclude that he already knew the answer to the inquiry. Why, if he knew it, would he be looking for it? "We don't know yet," he might say, or "We are not yet certain," perhaps with an impatient gesture that implied you were wasting his time.

Contrast that with talk about morality or the arts. If, in a literary seminar, you call criticism an objective inquiry, you will be instantly assumed to imagine that you know what the right judgments are. In which case, as the late Allan Bloom has recorded in his angry, entertaining book *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987), you are branded an absolutist, which is rather, as he says, like believing in the persecution of witches. So a sensible assumption that effortlessly applies in the laboratory is somehow inconceivable once it enters the library.

Some of the problems here are perhaps no more than lexical, in the sense that "objective" and "subjective" can mean different things in different contexts. In some contexts, "Are you being objective?" can mean "Are you getting it right?" But that does not explain or excuse the gross inequality of usage here between the arts and the sciences, for which no explanation, I believe, has ever been offered. It is an inequality that evidently lies deep in the consciousness of the Western world. Indeed, the confusion between objectivity and certainty is so deep that it would be amazing in a literary department to find an exception to it, and it is observably a marker that divides the young in choosing to study the arts or the sciences. To believe that objectivity defines no more than the logical status of the question—that there is much that is in principle knowable that is not yet known—often turns a youthful mind science-ward: to believe that no judgments can be certainly made or certainly known, by contrast, turns it toward the arts. That has its larger consequences. Literary departments tend to be full of people who are there because they believe there are no certain judgments, and who enjoy the sense of openness and vertigo that such a belief confers. Tell *them* that literary judgments are objective, and they will dismiss the possibility unexamined and with a wave of the hand. Tell us another. It is a view that threatens much more than their sense of literature. It threatens their sense of being.

If they turn to a reference book, they will not necessarily be enlightened. For example, in an article called "ethical objectivism" in Paul Edwards' *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (1967), Jonathan Harrison calls the concept "far from clear." That is right. But then he does little to clarify it. An ethical theory is objective, he argues,

> if it holds that the truth of what is asserted by some ethical sentence is independent of the person who uses this sentence, the time at which he uses it, and the place where he uses it.

But a lot of words like "here" and "now," far from being independent, rightly mean different things in different places and at different times. More damagingly, the account puts all the emphasis on utterance, whereas it is plain that one can make moral and aesthetic choices, and act on them, without using language at all. As Iris Murdoch remarked at the start of her *Sovereignty of Good* (1970), an unexamined life can be virtuous. Children too young to make any sentences can still adopt role models, after all, from those around them, and even adults can admire or disapprove, imitate or refuse to imitate, without using words. What is more, they can get such choices right or wrong, which is the defining characteristic of an objective inquiry; and we know that they are getting them wrong, on occasion and with great certainty, as when we read of pedophile rings in a daily newspaper or hear of young Germans in the 1930's who adopted the Nazis as a role model and joined the SS. Even the most extreme moral skeptic would seldom argue that such choices are a mere matter of opinion or that it is absolutist, in a discreditable sense, to condemn them. There is often a wide gap between seminar-theory and talk outside the seminar room, and the dogmatism of the extreme subjectivist like Jean-Paul Sartre has often been remarked. He believed moral choices, rightly considered, to be free and individual, and yet publicly condemned what he called American war crimes in Vietnam.

In short, the claim that criticism or morality is an objective inquiry has nothing to do with the claim to certain knowledge. (Equally, it does not exclude that claim.) One may know or not know a novel or poem to be good, and the objective status of the inquiry is unaffected. Scientists, after all, can have hunches that are still unverified, but they do not usually conclude that any view of the matter is as good as any other. Indeed, in some sciences, like demography, approximation is often as far as one can ever get, and yet demography is rightly seen as an objective inquiry. The population of China is whatever it is, even though in the nature of the case no expert can tell you what it is except as an approximate figure. That is because there are hundreds of deaths in China every minute, and hundreds of births. The totals change even as you read this sentence. That illustrates Wittgenstein's point about the difference between accuracy and precision. Precision in some cases is necessarily inaccurate. If criticism abounds in indeterminate question, then, like the character of Hamlet, that is no good reason in itself to deny its objectivity.

A puzzle, however, remains. Confront a skeptic with the simple distinction between knowing something, on the one hand, and thinking it an objective inquiry on the other, and you will be met with a guffaw or at best a blank stare. What, he will ask, could it matter to say that criticism or morality is objective if we cannot know the answers? It matters

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to the logical status of the question, which is to say that it matters enormously. Suppose, for example, a demographer were to approach the Chinese problem on the subjectivist assumption that any view of the total population of China is as good as any other; that it all depends on who, where, or what you are; that it is all ideological. Surely the effect of such an assumption on the science of demography would be shattering. No estimate would be false; no need could ever arise to refine or improve estimates already made. In other words, a scientific inquiry would have lost its status as a form of knowledge and entered into the shadowy world that critical theory has inhabited now for a generation or more, where no view is better than any other except in its power to stimulate or amuse.

If the case for critical subjectivism is now lost, where does theory go from here?

Objectivism has already scored a number of hard-fought gains in recent years, and it might be useful to summarize them. Knowledge is not the same as account-giving, as the case of the speechless infant shows; so an inability to answer does not, always and necessarily, signify ignorance. Accuracy is not precision, so the imprecision of much critical language is not a charge against its accuracy. Not all beliefs can be ideologically distorted: if they were, after all, that would be an objection to the very belief that all beliefs are ideologically distorted. And the ignorance of literary critics, like their failure to agree, makes no case against critical objectivism, since physicists and chemists too are often ignorant or divided. Knowledge thrives on conflict, in any case, and there is nothing to be concerned about when critics disagree or confess to uncertainty. No doubt any natural scientist would happily accept that most of the facts of the present cosmos, which number millions of bodies, are still unknown and likely to remain so. Add the possibility of another cosmos beyond this one, and the claim looks indisputable and in no way dispiriting. Any intellectual inquiry, whether in the arts or the sciences, has reason to rejoice that there is work to be done.

So what work is there in critical theory to be done?

One large task is to describe what people do, and at some risk to clarity, since the word has other meanings, I shall call that task descriptivist. A descriptivist, in this context, is one who describes how judgments are made rather than dogmatizing about how they ought to be made. A clearer way of putting this might be to say that, when asked how he knows something, he takes the question literally. That, one should be warned, is highly annoying behavior, and no descriptivist should look for an easy ride. If I were asked, for example, how I know the two-times table, I might artlessly reply with the name and address of the primary school where I learned it and even, if I can remember, with the name of the teacher who taught it to me. That answer is wholly accurate. It is indeed how I know. It is also, like other accurate answers, wholly unhelpful, since I might have been taught the same truths anywhere, and for just that reason it is deeply enraging. But then if the skeptic had wanted to know whether my reasons for believing in simple arithmetic were sufficient reasons, he should have had the courage to ask that question. At least a literal answer, enraging as it may be, has taught him one highly important truth: that a truth can be believed for reasons wholly inadequate and irrelevant, and that it is none the less true for that.

Suppose, similarly, someone were to ask how you know that a work of art is beautiful or that murder is wrong. Such questions, in practice, are seldom questions. They are more often challenges, implying that beliefs must be justifiable if they are to be allowed to count as knowledge. But the implication is absurd. Plenty of certain knowledge cannot be justified. I do not know how anyone would justify the belief that murder is wrong, and yet, like most people, I hold it to be certain. Those who seek to deny or qualify such certainties with ingenious counter-instances like the bomb-plotters who tried to kill Hitler in 1944 forget that not all killing is murder, and that an elaborate body of argument known as casuistry sorts out such marginal cases as tyrannicide, justifiable manslaughter, or self-defense.

Once again, argument can go forward by going back. Coleridge offered the outline of a descriptivist answer when, in an essay called "On the Principles Of Genial Criticism" (1814), he remarked of an ancient marble in the Vatican Museum known as the Apollo Belvedere that "it is not beautiful because it pleases" but "pleases us because it is beautiful." In recent years theorists have too easily dismissed naturalistic arguments like these. Naturalism means accepting that goodness and beauty are constituent aspects of the world, and that if we fail to recognize them the failure is squarely ours, much as the color-blind cannot recognize colors even though they are there. It offers a hope for critical theory; and if theory has a future, it is there.

For theory to turn naturalistic would represent a startling break with the tradition of Sartre and Barthes. But so it should. In recent years the skeptical tradition has turned into an unhappy mixture of the cynical and the vain: cynical, because the effort to justify grants and salaries has forced the skeptic into pretending that he is doing something significant when he knows he is not; vain, because it has cast the theorist back on himself, claiming an interest in his opinions on the sole ground that they define his own nature and personality. "The way I see it is . . ." can easily mean no more than "The sort of person I am is . . ." Narcissism is all that is left.

As that mood runs its course, there will be a mounting demand to say something, and something that is not about the critic. A cynic is never more than a spectator, usually a bored one; and the vain easily forget that other people are interesting too. That is the mood that leads back to naturalism. What if, after all, literature can be known, understood, and even (on occasion) described? The thought is unnerving. It can also excite.

Until it does, literature is condemned to be a playground rather than a subject, and that is bad news. True, people will sometimes pay good money to watch a game. But I suspect the literary critic is ill-placed in any competition with the Match of the Day or the World Series. This is a competition he simply cannot win. If literature is only a game, then there are better games; if it is a kind of knowledge, on the other hand, then it is not always clear there are better kinds of knowledge. That is where its great chance lies. Rilke once remarked admiringly of Cézanne that he did not paint "I like it" but "There it is." Theory now needs to do that too—to stop looking at itself, its own likes and dislikes, and start looking at what is there. For there it is.

George Watson, a Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, is the author of Writing a Thesis *(Longman),* The Certainty of Literature *(St. Martin's) and* British Literature since 1945 *(St. Martin's).*

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The Other Side of Peace

by Russell Gordon

"Uzivajte u ratu, uzivajte,
O braco moja i vojnici,
Jer mir ce' biti gori . . . "

("Enjoy war, enjoy,
Oh my brothers and soldiers,
because peace will be worse . . . ")

—An old Serbian war song

Photograph by Russell Gordon

Multicultural, indeed: With most Serbs expelled, the new neighbors move in to Marshal Tito Street in Sarajevo.

There is a belief among the peoples of the Balkans that war on the peninsula is cyclical and inevitable. Peace has been the exception at this crossroads of foreign interests, and the present hiatus will end—soon—if the current "peace process" continues.

Just as the internal administrative boundaries of the former Yugoslav state contributed to the current conflict, the present internationally delineated boundary of Bosnia perpetuates destabilization. The Serbs of Bosnia have a cultural identity but lack the statehood they sought through war. The Muslims have a state but are searching for an identity, wavering between Islamic fundamentalism and a homogeneous Bosnian nationalism. The collective memory of this new state includes some interesting historical revisionism and unusual claims to the diverse nature of the Yugoslav federation from which they fought to secede.

Peace is not merely the absence of war. As Balkan observer General Charles G. Boyd cautioned, "We have to see things as they are, not as we wish them to be." For example, the seemingly neutral and logical terms of the Dayton Accords for the return of refugees have been used selectively as a tool for increasing regional influence, notably of the Muslims. The strategic town of Brcko, in the narrow Posavina corridor which links the two parts of the Bosnian Serb Republic, is a prime example. NATO officials discovered that the Muslims returning in 1996 were in reality armed forward units of the Bosnian Army. The Sarajevo regime has used this tactic in other locations too. It has even relocated refugees in desperate conditions to create a humanitarian crisis as grounds for military action against disarmed Serbs.

The return of refugees has also been limited by mandate. While the Serbs are berated for not allowing Muslims and Croats to return to their former homes in eastern and northwestern Bosnia, no provision is made for the more than 600,000 Serbs expelled from what Croatia claimed as its sovereign territory. (The State Department's press statements reach almost comical proportions, lambasting the Serbs for not allowing Muslims to return to homes that no longer exist.) Nor are Serbs allowed to return to any of the towns in Bosnia of which they once were sizable and often majority constituents. Many of the Serbs from these areas, as well as those from Croatia, inhabit the housing that the Sarajevo regime desires. Unfortunately, the ethnographics of this region have changed, and the current approach will only heighten tensions. The policy seems to be a stepping-stone towards the expulsion of the remaining Serbs and the creation of a Muslim-led state.

Much as the suffering of wartime Sarajevo was manipulated as a tool to gain foreign support (or military aid), the appearance of diversity and tolerance is used to claim moral authority. On all sides, there are those who are willing to swear allegiance to the Bosnian "state." The reasons include a reluctance to abandon homes, provincial rather than ethnic loyalties, intermarriage (some 20 percent of the populace), and common experience, such as Serbs in Sarajevo suffering under Serb shelling. Serbia—unlike the now homogenous Croatia—is by far the most tolerant of the former republics, with large communities of Croats, Muslims, Albanians, Gypsies, and other ethnicities, while Sarajevo is arguably the most tolerant area in Bosnia, owing largely to its cosmopolitan nature rather than that of the regime. Like other regions in Bosnia, tolerance of minority populations exists when the majority of them have been expelled.

The war atrocities in the Balkans were indeed horrific. But as U.N. investigations (such as the reports on Croatian assaults against Serb areas) have revealed, this cruelty was committed by *all* parties. One member of the international teams investigating mass graves in Bosnia estimated their number at around 800, containing roughly 65 percent Muslims, 30 percent Serbs, and five percent Croats. Noticeably absent were NATO-led exhumations in the Krajina region where the percentage of Serb fatalities was disproportionately higher. Yet even if these figures are accepted at face value, the Hague Tribunal's indictments are applied with weighted measure: Serb Milan Martic is indicted for rocketing Zagreb and killing a half dozen people, while Croat Tomislav Mercep (whose special units butchered Serb civilians) was awarded a medal and appointed Mayor of Vukovar. The duplicity is so

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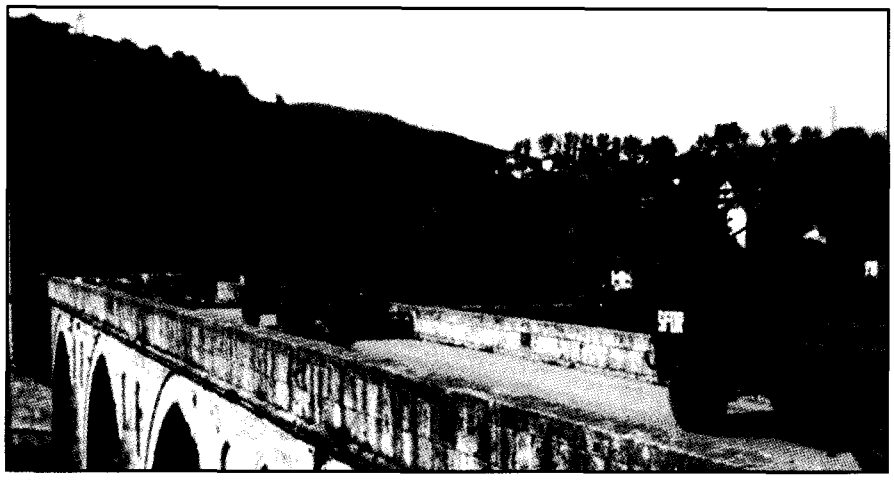

Photograph by Russell Gordon

The fourth occupation in one hundred years: Italian NATO troops roll across the bridge on the Drina.

transparent that even those who might benefit from it have voiced consternation. "It's insane to indict Karadzic and not Izetbegovic," a Bosnian Muslim and former Yugoslav diplomat stated. "If Americans are going to behave as imperialists, they should at least be evenhanded."

Murder by instigation and proxy is also a crime. Srebrenica is one example. Muslim forces under the command of Nasser Oric launched attacks against Serb villages from what was supposed to be a demilitarized, U.N.-protected Safe Area. This diversionary force was tactically successful in drawing overextended Serb forces from primary confrontation zones. Despite an estimated 1,000 Serb casualties and 30 villages sacked, the Muslims demanded U.N. protection from the "aggression" of Serb retaliatory fire. In what bears the hallmarks of a covert American operation, Oric received Iranian weapons smuggled into the Safe Area in 40 pound flour bags of humanitarian aid. (The Serbs reportedly further fell for the bait when American and British diplomats encouraged them to "settle the territorial dispute on the ground.") Overrun after heavy fighting, as many as a thousand Muslim males were rounded up and summarily executed: an atrocity by any standard, but one much less horrific than accounts of it by the media. A similar level of brutality was committed a month later by the American-backed Croatian Army, when it sacked the Serbian Krajina: this time, no histrionics and no indictments.

It is a remarkable accomplishment of the international press corps that the ethnic group which now constitutes the largest body of refugees can be demonized for committing the majority of ethnic cleansing. Indeed, many events of the Balkan War were plays behind the stage. In what was largely a commercial conflict, perhaps second in recent memory only to Chechnya, several front lines around Sarajevo were fixed by mutual agreement of military officers involved in blackmarketeering. These racketeers traded everything: consumer goods, weaponry, factories, even people. UNPROFOR personnel participated widely as middlemen, much to the organization's discredit.

Boundaries were redrawn when politically expedient. Under international threat, Serb leaders west of the Drina surrendered enormous tracts of territory, and politicians kept their positions and affluence at the expense of thousands of casualties among their constituents. But in lieu of partition—the most logical solution—there are options other than military expansion by the Sarajevo regime. Case in point: the Dayton Accords provided for freedom of movement; subsequently, mobility has increased, and families and friends have been reunited. Some Serbs are returning from Serb territory and abroad to live in Sarajevo, and others stayed in its environs acquired by the Dayton Accords. Some describe life there as "infinitely better" than among their kinsmen in Serbia. Serbs in these areas have also reported favorably on the professionalism and impartiality of the new Federation police forces—a credit to them, and to their international monitors. Additionally, the multiethnic local staff employed by the NATO-led force have helped to build confidence in the possibility of coexistence.

The Republika Srpska, compared to Sarajevo, is like a Third World country; the evidence of economic deprivation and political isolation is everywhere. Wages average a third of those in the Federation, yet the Republika Srpska receives only two percent of the humanitarian aid, though its needs are much greater than the Federation's.

The Serbs could be given further incentives to participate in a tripartite Bosnian Federation. What prevents them from cooperating is the fear of living under the Muslim extremist plutocracy that the United States has so enthusiastically supported. One requisite for lasting peace, therefore, is a change in leadership in the Sarajevo regime, which the United States could easily arrange. A second requirement is that either top-level Croats and Muslims are indicted for their crimes (making the Tribunal truly impartial and lending it legitimacy) or a general amnesty is offered (however unpalatable that might be for domestic American consumption). Third, Serbian security should be protected by their own territorial defense forces and joint police forces. Bosnian Serbs should also have true veto power over policies that affect them and enjoy the same special relationship with Serbia that the Croats of Bosnia have with Zagreb. And however late, Federation forces should be limited to defensive, rather than offensive, capabilities. The rhetoric about balancing power in the region is too often a crass attempt to negate Serb defenses. Forcing the Serbs to live under the Muslims will not work: forcing the Muslims to cooperate with the Serbs can. The shotgun marriage of the Dayton Accords cannot succeed, but the Muslim-Croat marriage of convenience could. Show the Serbs that they are secure, encourage investment and economic cooperation, and ethnic reintegration can occur.

Reconciliation has occurred among even more polarized and brutalized populations in recent memory, and it can occur in Bosnia, if given a chance. From the beginning, the United States has held the keys to creating a climate of peace. Instead, we seem to be maneuvering for a resumption of conflict that will justify the perpetuation of our own regional satellite.

World affairs photojournalist Russell Gordon has been covering the Balkan War for Zuma Press.

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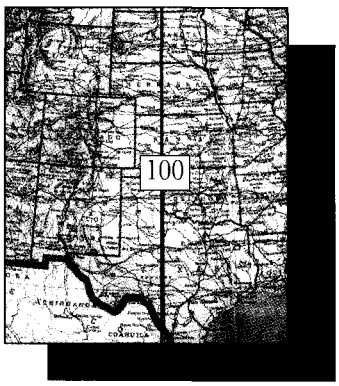
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Epic America



Up in Oregon a woman was bathing in a river. The transistor radio she had set on the bank played as she swam. She was still swimming when a movement farther along the bank caught her eye. She turned and saw Elvis disappearing into the woods on her side of the river. At the same moment "Heartbreak Hotel" came on the radio.

We tend to regard Elvis sightings as examples of a peculiarly contemporary form of zaniness, yet the phenomenon of autosuggestion induced by heroes or celebrities is probably as old as human history itself. People have been seeing Mary the Mother of God for nearly two millennia, and the folk history of Europe is enriched by apparitions of figures beloved by the populace from their own time, or earlier ones. The author of the Wobbly ballad claimed he saw Joe Hill last night, and Lew Rockwell, in an adaptation of the Hill lyrics, saw Murray Rothbard. Popular icons, like left-wing causes, never die. So with Butch Cassidy, the Sundance Kid. And so with the other Kid, Billy—alias William Bonney, William Antrim, and Kid Antrim—whose actual name was Billy McCarty and who was born, probably, in Missouri around 1855 and grew up in Silver City, New Mexico Territory. This worthy youth was dispatched to bliss eternal by Sheriff Pat Garrett at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, at midnight, July 14, 1881—and almost immediately, as one of his biographers says, the Billy the Kid of legend came alive. Since that night he has been spotted many times throughout the West, and in Old Mexico. Not only for New Mexico but the entire Southwest, Billy, who achieved fame and notoriety in the Lincoln County War, had been adopted well before his death by much of the Mexican population of the region, and also by many small cattlemen of the Anglo-Saxon persuasion, as their champion against the cattle interest. Pat Garrett's shot in the dark in Pete Maxwell's adobe house in Fort Sumner made him a hero in certain circles only; beyond them he was instantly branded as a coward and a murderer, a hired gun of privilege. Many of the Kid's fans to survive the following 27 years must have been gratified to learn of Garrett's own murder five miles east of Las Cruces on the Mail-Scott Road (now Highway 70), where he had descended from Carl Adamson's buggy to urinate and was shot twice in the back of the head while assuming a highly indefensible position.

The literature, print and celluloid, of violence in the Old American West—the Southwest especially—is vast enough to fill the Grand Canyon, which for the majority of Americans perhaps is a less awesome phenomenon than the bloody frontier saga evoked by names like Wyatt Earp, George Scarborough, and John Wesley Hardin, and events such as the shootout at the OK Corral and Jesse James laid in his grave by Bob Ford. Individually these are mythic tales; collectively they amount to nothing less than the Great American Epic with which we must be content, the Great American Novel having failed to make its advent among us. People who dare to doubt that other American myth called Progress are certainly entitled to find validation for their heresy in the cultural descent implied by the replacement of the quick-draw artist by the pelvically oriented guitar-picker packing a slower type of gun as the model of American manhood. Still, how is it that a commercial civilization dedicated from the beginning to making America safe for making money *and for keeping it* can find not just enjoyment but inspiration in the spectacle of violent outlawry at the margin and beyond of ordered middle-class life and the rule of law? One answer is the American tradition of a comfortable and complacent gnosticism which understands American history as a battle between good men and bad ones, a pitched fight between almost-equals in which the bad men, however, slowly lose ground and are conclusively defeated in the end. But on the frontier and in the wilderness conditions were too fluid, the circumstances of existence too uncertain, for romantic gnosticism to enjoy more than superficial plausibility. Scarborough, Garrett, Hardin, John Selman—men like these constantly crossed and recrossed the boundary between legal and illegal behavior, while the ambiguities characteristic of a half-formed society made it often difficult for anyone—themselves and others—to know on which side of the line they actually stood. The position of the best men of this place and time was that of a God-fearing person compelled to apply familiar moral and theological axioms to hitherto unforeseen and unimaginable situations, in a totally ad hoc manner. Was Scarborough, in his pursuit of rustlers in the southern territories of Arizona and New Mexico, acting as a casually deputized arm of the law or as the paid hitman of the cattle growers' association? Probably he was both, unable himself to have said which.

The frontier ended about the same time Scarborough did, and today the wilderness is a place where backpackers go to fornicate in the bosom of Mother Gaia. The violence, though, has come creeping back into American life, spreading itself indiscriminately and with democratic partiality around the nation: big cities and small ones, suburbs, small towns, and the hinterland. A strange time, you say, for the American Epic to find favor, and of course the usurper elite that operates America while attempting to dictate the tastes, interests, and enthusiasms of the people has been working very hard to discredit and explode the epic for more than a generation. So far its efforts have had only mixed success at the popular level, where audiences seem innocently to miss the heavy-handed revisionism of movies like *Dances With Wolves* (which

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to them is only a romance with plenty of old-fashioned violence, the whole effect somewhat marred by Kevin Costner's bare backside), while even in the more exalted reaches of society Patsy Limerick's New Western History is already drawing yawns. Mainstream publishers continue tossing off generic Westerns and coffee-table books, and the best of the Western university presses get on with the job of adding to the corpus of Western scholarly letters, as the University of Oklahoma Press has recently done with *George Scarborough: The Life and Death of a Lawman on the Closing Frontier* by Robert K. DeArment.

Unlike sex, violence is something most people prefer to experience vicariously. Probably being murdered in virtual reality is an experience the average person would choose to forego, even if he might enjoy watching a snuff movie now and again. Vicariousness operates on two levels, location and time. In the first instance, something—bad or good—happens to the other fellow. In the second, it happens to him in another period. Vicariousness with respect to location is a relief; where time is concerned, a reassurance, making the violence of the Old West palatable to consumers of Western lore and legend. We enjoy reading about Custer's Last Stand not simply because we are present only in imagination but because the event and the conditions that produced it, lying in the past, are no longer dynamic but static, threatening no one. The same is true of history in general, which is why sentimentalists and other timid souls are always happiest living (as they suppose) in the past. History stays put, a source of comfort for simple minds and of alarm only to ideologues. For ordinary Americans situated somewhere between these extremes, the Wild, Wild West appeals—for its spirit of adventure and endurance, bravery and heroism—to an age of commercial and bureaucratic tedium from which technique has removed most material challenges, leaving seduction as the only imaginable form of physical adventure. The Old West serves not only as an outlet for the imagination but as a place for it to roam in. Which is what it ought to be, since it is in roaming of this kind that people discover not just the past but what in history is worthy of honor and emulation.

Still unaccounted for is the inclusiveness of the Old West's appeal. The frontier was a cruel and ruthless place, barely civilized, full of ugliness and crudity, rampant public distemper and immorality whose vices, indeed, were the necessary precondition of its virtues. But the bards of the American Epic extol the scene in its raw entirety, while their auditors applaud. The fact tells us something. Raymond Chandler's fans are responding to Philip Marlowe's chivalrous challenge to the corruption and barbarity of Los Angeles in the 1930's, not to the corrupt and barbarous themselves. Similarly, viewers of contemporary cop shows are enthralled by the ongoing battle against depraved criminals and the culture of criminality, not by criminal culture in its own right. Yet the literature of the Old West is almost as quick to glamorize whores, cardsharps, cutthroats, and bandits as it is lawmen and hardy pioneers. It is this indiscriminate quality of appreciation that gives the Western epic its reputation as an exercise in nostalgia, leading directly to widespread disapprobation among the mandarin class.

The nostalgia, though detectable, is actually a lesser element of the legend of the Old West, which essentially celebrates nothing more—or less—than the role violence necessarily plays in an acceding society—a civilization creating itself out of chaos and building from the bottom up. In these circumstances violence surely has a positive, even a heroic, aspect; the spectacle of violence exhilarates rather than depresses, inspires instead of discourages. Only in deceding societies does violence appeal to us as inevitably tawdry and mean, reprehensible—inhuman and therefore inexcusable. So frontier violence in the 19th century appears in retrospect to have had an engaging and constructive aspect, unlike the destructive mayhem of recent times. That is not the whole story, of course; perhaps it is even a minority report. The frontier knew more, way more, than its share of sadism, nihilism, and evil done only in the name of evil. The perception, however, is somewhat different: violence as fundamentally life-affirming as opposed to life-denying.

No country in the history of the world has moved from youth to sclerotic old age as rapidly as the United States has, and America's love affair with the youthful culture of the American frontier reflects this fact. The affair, in addition, is not America's alone, but the world's. Every summer mules burdened by six-foot-five German males wearing powder-blue cowboy suits—hatted, booted, and spurred—descend from the South Rim to the depths of the Grand Canyon, and Japanese tourists encumbered by three and four cameras each stand beside their air-conditioned buses at Dead Horse Point above the Colorado River, straining their eyes for a vision of Moab, Utah, the desert oasis and home to the only Golden Arches for a hundred miles around. As the West was once the building edge of the United States, so the New World was the frontier extension of the Old: Europe and the Americas involved together in intersecting cycles of growth and decay, accedence and decedence, acquisition and retrenchment, violence and repose. While the American West was still in the process of formation, eastward the nation was already in decline, spiritually and intellectually though not materially; in the same way, the rise of American civilization occurred as the older civilization that had produced it continued to fall farther from the zenith. As long as the Old West was a going concern, the American people—and others—had a vision of something that was new in the world, and at the same time very old. In this respect the closing of the American frontier as marked by Frederick Jackson Turner was felt not only by the settled part of the country but by the rest of the world as well.

A final aspect of the Old American West is very real and has not passed unnoticed by the ruling class in our own day which, understanding precisely how far it has gone in revoking the rights and privileges of a free people and in destroying their culture, their country, and their tradition (the U.N.'s definition of genocide), turns now to the job of assuring that the people have no redress from tyranny. The violence of the American frontier—in fact, of America itself—has historically been recognized by true Americans to be in some degree cathartic, exercising a cleansing influence on those occasions when it has been responsibly mobilized and directed. Violence as a potentially positive force in the world is an integral part of American folklore, and of American myth. Much as our rulers want it to, it will not go away. The American Epic, the legend of the American West, is the Fort Knox—known to all, available only to its keepers—in which the real national treasure is stored.

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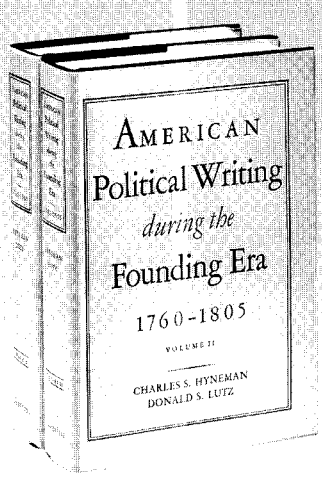

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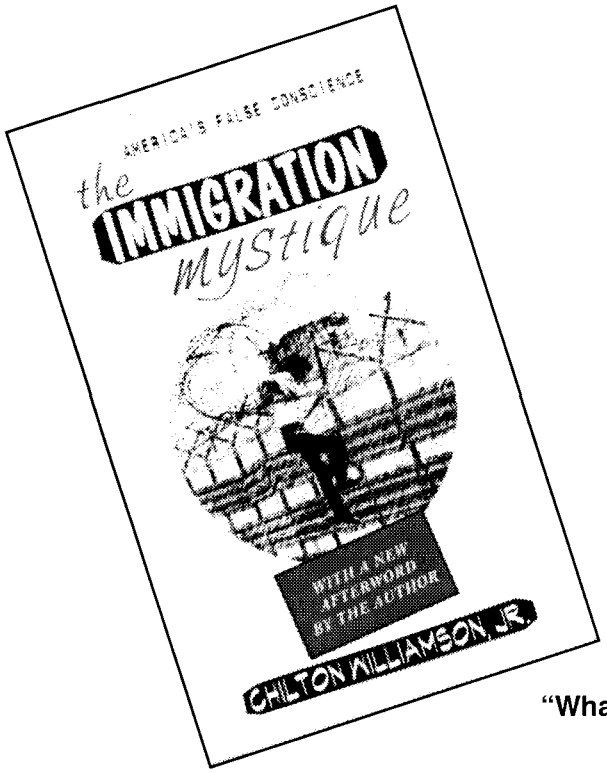

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